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Oceans and the law of the sea

Oceans and the law of the sea

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 309 of General Assembly resolution 69/245 of 29 December 2014, with a view to facilitating discussions on the topic of focus at the sixteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, on the theme entitled "Oceans and sustainable development: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, environmental, social and economic". It constitutes the first part of the report of the Secretary-General on developments and issues relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea for consideration by the Assembly at its seventieth session. The report is also being submitted to the States parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, pursuant to article 319 of the Convention. In the light of the multifaceted nature of the topic being covered and the page limitations established by the General Assembly, the report does not purport to provide an exhaustive synthesis of available information.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 298 of its resolution 69/245 of 29 December 2014, the General Assembly decided that, in its deliberations on the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (the Informal Consultative Process) would focus its discussions at its sixteenth meeting on "Oceans and sustainable development: integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, environmental, social and economic".

2. At the core of sustainable development are the strong interlinkages between sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection. The effective functioning of each individual dimension depends on the effective functioning of the other two. If one or the other dimensions are pursued separately, and the other dimension is not taken into account, this could lead to an ultimate loss in all three dimensions because of the inextricable linkages between them.[1] Successful sustainable development therefore requires integrated approaches that ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection, or so-called "triple wins".

3. In the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want", States acknowledged that, since 1992, there had been areas of insufficient progress and setbacks in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, aggravated by multiple financial, economic, food and energy crises, which had threatened the ability of all countries, in particular developing countries, to achieve sustainable development.[2] They also acknowledged the need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their interlinkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.[3]

4. The importance of oceans for sustainable development has been recognized in the outcome documents of various conferences and summits on sustainable development, including Agenda 21,[4] the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation)[5] and "The future we want".[6] In the latter document, States stressed the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development, including through their contributions to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, food security and creation of sustainable

[1] Economic and Social Council, "Achieving sustainable development: integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions", concept note prepared for the Economic and Social Council integration meeting, held on 13 May 2013.

[2] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, para. 20.

[3] Ibid., para. 3.

[4] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[5] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[6] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment and addressing the impacts of climate change.[7]

5. Integration of the environmental, social and economic dimensions is at the core of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Central to the Convention is the balance of the enjoyment of rights and benefits with the concomitant undertaking of duties and obligations. Effective implementation of the Convention can therefore make a significant contribution to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, and "The future we want" recognizes the importance of the Convention to advancing sustainable development.[8]

6. The present report highlights the current state of integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in relation to oceans, as well as opportunities for, and challenges to, the enhanced integration of the three dimensions. In doing so, it draws attention to activities and initiatives undertaken with a view to promoting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in relation to oceans.

7. The Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the organizations and bodies that contributed to the present report,[9] namely, the European Union; the secretariat of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission); the secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources); the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the Forum Fisheries Agency; the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC); the International Atomic Energy Agency; the International Coral Reef Initiative; the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO); the International Labour Organization (ILO); the International Seabed Authority; the International Maritime Organization (IMO); the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization; the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization; the Pacific Islands Forum; the Secretariat of the Pacific Community; the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme); the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation; the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean; the Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic; the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission; and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations University Fisheries

[7] Ibid., para. 158.

[8] Ibid., para. 159.

[9] Contributions authorized by the authors to be posted online are available at www.un.org/Depts/los/general_assembly/general_assembly_reports.htm.

Training Programme also made contributions. The report also draws on information from other sources.

II. Oceans and the three dimensions of sustainable development

8. The oceans provide a wide range of services to human society, which play a critical role in each dimension of sustainable development, either directly or through impacts on services in other sectors.[10] The present section briefly outlines the contribution of oceans to the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development and the manner in which the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea addresses these dimensions. It also presents information on how various conferences and summits on sustainable development have addressed the issue of integration.

A. Oceans and each dimension of sustainable development

1. Environmental dimension

9. The environmental dimension of oceans and the importance of healthy and productive oceans to sustainable development are best reflected in the supporting (e.g., resilience to environmental change) and regulating services (e.g., climate regulation through carbon storage and sequestration, nutrient cycling) that they provide. These, in turn, allow for the continued delivery of the provisioning (e.g., food, energy, employment) and cultural services (e.g., scientific knowledge, culture, recreation), which are the basis of the economic and social dimensions of the role of oceans in sustainable development.[11]

10. Healthy, resilient oceans have a role in oxygen production, photosynthesis and nutrient cycling.[12] For example, marine phytoplankton produces 50 per cent of the oxygen on Earth,[13] and coastal ecosystems, such as wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds, play a major role in the life cycle of many marine organisms by providing breeding, nursing and feeding grounds.[14] Healthy, resilient oceans also have a role in regulating the climate, natural hazards, such as floods, and water quality. For example, coastal wetlands have a role in capturing and filtering sediments and organic wastes in transit from inland regions to the ocean. Oceans capture and store about 30 per cent of carbon dioxide produced by humans,[15] through fixation of atmospheric carbon by oceanic algae and its deposition in deep water, thereby influencing the global carbon cycle.

[10] United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) World Conservation Monitoring Centre, *Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Services: Valuation Methods and Their Practical Application*, UNEP-WCMC Biodiversity Series, No. 33 (2011).

[11] Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystems and Human Well-being Synthesis: A Report of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment* (Washington, D.C., Island Press, 2005); see also UNEP and others, *Green Economy in a Blue World: Synthesis Report* (UNEP, 2012).

[12] Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystems and Human Well-being Synthesis* (see footnote 11 above).

[13] IOC and others, *A Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability* (Paris, 2011).

[14] A/69/71, para. 59.

[15] Ibid., para. 63.

11. The importance of these services cannot be overstated, given that as much as 40 per cent of the world's population lives within 100 km of the shoreline,[16] and it is estimated that over 3 billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods.[17]

12. In view of the above, damage to the marine environment resulting from pollution, unsustainable extraction of marine resources, alien invasive species, ocean acidification and climate change impacts, and physical alteration and destruction of marine habitats, negatively affect the delivery of important ecosystem services and therefore sustainable development. For example, disruptions to the delivery of marine ecosystem services caused by climate change and ocean acidification will seriously affect the economy of coastal communities (see paras. 67-70 below) and may impact food security and livelihoods and result in increased poverty.[18]

13. The outcome of several conferences on sustainable development have acknowledged that healthy, productive and resilient oceans and coasts are critical for, inter alia, poverty eradication, access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, livelihoods, economic development and essential ecosystem services (see paras. 22-27 below). The essential role of a healthy marine environment in supporting the objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and achieving sustainable development is taken into account in Part XII of the Convention, which provides a framework for the protection and preservation of the marine environment, including the general obligation of States to protect and preserve the marine environment. While States have the sovereign right to exploit their natural resources, they must do so pursuant to their environmental policies and in accordance with their duty to protect and preserve the marine environment.

2. Social dimension

14. Oceans make important social contributions through the provision of food security and livelihoods, and also through their significance in the heritage and culture of many States, especially coastal and small island States.[19] The marine environment is also a basis for the development of products, such as pharmaceuticals (see para. 63 below), as well as recreation and tourism (see paras. 56-60). It has been estimated that 350 million jobs worldwide are linked to oceans.[20] Over 1.5 million people, the vast majority from developing countries, work as seafarers.[21] For example, Filipino seafarers, who represent around 20 per cent of the seafarers around the world,[22] contribute to the economic and social development of their country through their remittances, which can reach up to $1 billion.

15. The fisheries and aquaculture sectors are estimated to employ 55 million people and support the livelihoods of between 660 and 820 million people

[16] UNEP and others, *Green Economy in a Blue World* (see footnote 11 above).
[17] Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, *Biodiversity, Development and Poverty Alleviation: Recognizing the Role of Biodiversity for Human Well-being* (Montreal, 2009).
[18] Contribution of IAEA.
[19] Contribution of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.
[20] Contribution of the European Union.
[21] IMO, "World Maritime Day: a concept of a sustainable maritime transportation system" (2013).
[22] ILO, "Decent work for seafarers" (2014).

globally.[23] Recently, the increasing and beneficial role of women in the maritime industry, including the fisheries sector, and the need to strengthen their capacity to engage in a productive manner in that sector has been recognized.[24] Women accounted for more than 15 per cent of all people directly engaged in the fisheries primary sector in 2012, the proportion of women rising to 90 per cent in secondary activities (e.g., processing).[25]

16. Unsustainable fishing practices, including overexploitation, can have negative social impacts. In addition, conditions such as forced labour, trafficking, abandonment, highly dangerous working conditions and the use of child labour undermine the lives of people working at sea as well as the marine environment and the economic efficiency of maritime sectors.[26] Ensuring decent working conditions for seafarers, fishers and other maritime workers is thus essential to ensuring the economic viability of maritime sectors. It is also essential that seafarers and fishers be appropriately trained, inter alia, in the measures necessary to avoid damage to the marine environment.[27]

17. Many societies regard nature, including the oceans, as an extension of human society, making the culture-sensitive stewardship of oceans crucial to sustainable development.[28] In many parts of the world, indigenous peoples have long been the custodians of the marine and coastal environment, and have sustainably used resources in these areas in accordance with their cultural traditions.[29] Natural areas held sacred by peoples are found all around the world, including in coastal and marine areas.[30] In some parts of the world, fish and fishing are important components of many cultural, ceremonial and social events, for communal sharing, and as tools for teaching and practicing traditional ways. For many indigenous peoples, cultural values are attached to migratory species, such as cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), sharks and seabirds.[30] While culture was not originally included in the Millennium Development Goals, subsequent conferences, such as the 2005 World Summit and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, began to recognize its importance.[30]

18. The economic and social advancement of all peoples of the world is one of the main objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. As explained in paragraph 20 below, the Convention gives effect to the common heritage of mankind principle. Furthermore, it also specifically addresses seafarers and coastal communities through a number of its provisions. For example, measures to ensure safety of ships at sea include those relating to the manning of ships, labour conditions and the training of crews. In addition, the provisions of the Convention

[23] Rockefeller Foundation, "Securing the livelihoods and nutritional needs of fish-dependent communities" (2013).

[24] See A/69/71/Add.1.

[25] FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2014* (Rome, 2014).

[26] Contribution of ILO.

[27] IMO has adopted instruments to address the issue of minimum standards of competence for seafarers and guidelines to improve the safety of international shipping and to reduce pollution from ships by altering the way ships are managed and operated (see www.imo.org/OurWork/HumanElement/Pages/Default.aspx).

[28] UNESCO, "Culture in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda: why culture is key to sustainable development", background note. Available from www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/images/Post2015SustainableDevelopmentAgendaENG.pdf.

[29] UNEP, document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/10.

[30] See General Assembly resolutions 60/1 and 66/288.

related to the conservation and management of marine living resources require taking into account the economic needs of coastal fishing communities, as well as nutritional needs. The Convention also provides a basis for modern communications by setting out a regime related to the laying of submarine cables (see paras. 53-55 below).

3. Economic dimension

19. Oceans provide a source of employment, trade and economic well-being for millions of people around the world.[31] A number of economic activities are ocean-based or rely on the use of ocean space and its resources, including the fishing, marine aquaculture, shipping, shipbuilding, tourism, oil, gas, mining, transportation and international communications industries, as well as emerging sectors such as offshore renewable energy. With more than 90 per cent of global trade being carried by shipping, maritime transport constitutes the backbone of international trade. It has been estimated that the market value of marine and coastal resources and industries is around 3 trillion dollars annually (about 5 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP)).[32] Other ocean-based activities, such as hydrographic and meteorological activities, also indirectly bring about economic benefits.[33] The manifold employment opportunities, as well as ecosystem and cultural services, provided by the oceans create the conditions for a global ocean-based economy, which is estimated at 3 to 6 trillion dollars per year.[13]

20. Economic aspects, including through the objectives of promoting the economic advancement of all peoples of the world and contributing to the realization of a just and equitable international economic order which takes into account the interests and needs of mankind as a whole and, in particular, the special interests and needs of developing countries, whether coastal or land-locked, are central to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Convention creates an enabling legal environment for a number of economic activities relying on the use of ocean space or marine resources. For example, Convention facilitates navigation and promotes the safety of navigation, which underpins cost-effective maritime transport and international trade. The Convention and the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (the Part XI Agreement) put into effect the concept of common heritage of mankind as applied to the development of the resources of the Area, which include polymetallic or manganese nodules and polymetallic sulphides, which contain metals and rare earth elements increasingly required by high-technology industries, including electronics, and clean technologies, such as hybrid cars and wind turbines. Activities in the Area must be carried out in such a manner as to foster healthy development of the world economy and balanced growth of international trade, and to promote international cooperation for the overall development of all countries, especially developing States (see paras. 45 and 48 below). In addition, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (the Fish Stocks Agreement) provide a comprehensive regime for the

[31] Contribution of FAO.

[32] Contribution of the European Union.

[33] Contributions of IHO and WMO.

conservation and sustainable management of marine living resources, which are an essential basis for a prosperous fisheries sector (see paras. 34-40). The Convention also provides coastal States with sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting their non-living resources within areas under national jurisdiction and with regard to other activities for the economic exploitation and exploration of the exclusive economic zone, such as the production of energy from the water, currents and winds (see paras. 50-52). The Convention also facilitates the laying of submarine cables and pipelines (see paras. 53-55), thereby supporting international communication and trade in oil and gas (see paras. 41-49).

B. Integration in the outcomes of sustainable development meetings

21. Although the economic, social and environmental aspects of ocean issues are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole, integrating these aspects has proven to be a challenge, in spite of the repeated calls made at various conferences and summits on sustainable development.

22. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 3 to 14 June 1992, was convened to address the environmental implications of economic development, recognizing that sustainable development depended upon a balance of environmental, social and economic approaches. Agenda 21,[34] the comprehensive plan of action adopted at the Conference, in its chapter 17 entitled "Protection of the oceans, all kinds of seas, including enclosed and semi-enclosed seas, and coastal areas and the protection, rational use and development of their living resources", acknowledged, inter alia, that integrated approaches to marine and coastal area management and development had to be taken at all levels.

23. In 1997, the General Assembly adopted the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, in which it recognized that "economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development".[35] With regard to oceans, the Programme stressed the need for approaches that are, inter alia, integrated in content and set out the commitment of States to integrated management and sustainable development of coastal areas and the marine environment.

24. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,[5] the outcome document of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, established new commitments and priorities for action on sustainable development in an integrated manner, and outlined actions that could be taken at the global and regional levels towards ensuring the sustainable development of the oceans, seas, islands and coastal areas, while promoting an integrated, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach to policymaking at the national, regional and local levels.

25. The World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) indicated the resolve of States to improve cooperation and coordination at all levels in order to

[34] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[35] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex, para. 23.

address issues related to oceans and seas in an integrated manner and promote integrated management and sustainable development of the oceans and seas.

26. An earlier report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea (A/66/70/Add.1) provided more detailed information on the manner in which various conferences and summits related to sustainable development had addressed oceans issues up to that point. Subsequently, the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want" (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), provided an extensive assessment of the progress and gaps in the implementation of the sustainable development agenda. It devoted a specific section to oceans and seas, and emphasized the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development.

27. However, in "The future we want", States also acknowledged that, since 1992, there had been areas of insufficient progress and setbacks in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. In that regard, they acknowledged the need to further mainstream and integrate the three pillars of sustainable development at all levels. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development launched a process to develop a set of sustainable development goals based on identified priority areas. The Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals proposed an integrated, indivisible set of global priorities for sustainable development in the form of 17 goals (see A/68/970 and Corr.1). Goal 14 aims to "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development" and includes seven substantive targets and three targets related to means of implementation.

28. In its resolution 68/309, the General Assembly decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals would be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs would also be considered.[39] Therefore, identifying the linkages between the sustainable development of oceans and seas and the goals put forth by the Open Working Group could contribute to understanding the role of oceans in the sustainable development agenda and the need for enhanced integration of the environmental, social and economic dimensions in relation to oceans.

III. Opportunities for, and challenges to, the enhanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in relation to oceans

29. The interconnectedness of the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development in relation to oceans is, by and large, well-studied, as shown in the present section. However, enhancing integration of these dimensions and developing and implementing policies and actions that ensure balanced and integrated development of each dimension has been challenging for a number of reasons.[7] This section aims to provide a brief overview of the main challenges to, and opportunities for, enhanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable

[39] General Assembly resolution 68/309.

development in relation to oceans, with a focus on some of the main sectors and ocean uses.

A. Integration of the three dimensions in selected areas of ocean affairs

1. Shipping

30. World trade and shipping, upon which it depends, are fundamental to sustaining economic growth and promoting prosperity, thereby fulfilling a critical social and economic function.[37] Maritime shipping contributes to all three dimensions of sustainable development, including by facilitating global commerce and the transportation of goods, by directly and indirectly supporting economies and the livelihoods of people around the world and by providing a comparatively more environmentally friendly means of transportation.[38] Several socioeconomic benefits result from maritime shipping, including worldwide access to goods and services that can contribute, inter alia, to poverty eradication, reducing inequality, increasing employment opportunities and promoting sustainable growth. Shipping, ports and related auxiliary services can thus play a crucial role in supporting wealth-creating and poverty-alleviating activities in both developed and developing countries. In this context, shipping has a strategic role in international trade and supply chains.[39]

31. There is a need, however, for further efforts to integrate the environmental dimension and specific aspects of the social dimension, such as the working conditions of people at sea, in the shipping sector. Two thirds of all active seafarers are being recruited from developing countries. ILO has adopted standards aimed at workers in specific economic sectors, such as seafarers and fishers. Effective implementation of international instruments, such as the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, of ILO, is one means to improve the working and living conditions of seafarers worldwide.[40] That Convention, along with the amendments to it adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2014, is an important instrument to protect seafarers against exploitation and safety hazards and to achieve decent work for seafarers while securing economic interests in fair competition for shipowners.[41] Capacity-building to facilitate implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention by States is crucial to the safety and security of maritime trade.

32. However, it is also important to strengthen action to suppress criminal acts at sea which endanger the welfare of seafarers (e.g., through hostage-taking) and the security of navigation and commerce. For example, between 2008 and 2012, piracy off the coast of Somalia caused serious and significant disruption to international navigation and trade, as well as loss of life, revenues and income, declines in

[37] Contribution of IMO.

[38] See also Anna Natova, "Shipping and the three dimensions of sustainable development", alumni contribution. Available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[39] Contributions of IMO and UNCTAD.

[40] International Chamber of Shipping, *Annual Review 2013* (London, 2013). Women make up only an estimated 2 per cent of the world's maritime workforce (see www.itfseafarers.org/ITF-women-seafarers.cfm).

[41] See www.ilo.org/global/standards/maritime-labour-convention/WCMS_246823/lang--en/index.htm; see also A/69/71/Add.1.

seafarer recruitment and considerable additional expenses on the part of naval patrols, shipowners and protection and indemnity clubs.[42] The decline in successful attacks off the coast of Somalia, which was assisted by, inter alia, naval patrols, industry best practices, capacity-building and the development of sustainable alternative livelihoods, has had a positive impact on international shipping and trade. It has also meant a decline in threats to the lives and livelihoods of seafarers.[43]

33. The international community has continued its efforts to integrate the environmental dimension through the development of the maritime transportation sector in a safe, efficient and environmentally sound manner, having regard to the need to ensure the protection of coastal and marine resources.[44] This includes, for example, developing, implementing and enforcing energy-efficiency standards for ships, thereby reducing emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases from ships. (see A/69/71/Add.1). Regional organizations are also working to integrate aspects of international shipping with the need to ensure protection of the marine environment.[45]

2. Exploitation of marine living resources

34. The contribution of sustainable fisheries to all three dimensions of sustainable development has been repeatedly highlighted.[46] Moreover, in fisheries, the linkages between the economic dimension of resource exploitation, the environmental dimension of resource and ecosystem conservation and the social dimension of the impacts on fish workers, coastal communities and others are well-documented. Thus, the integration of all three dimensions of sustainable development in the fisheries sector is considered crucial to the achievement of sustainable fisheries. Such fisheries also contribute tangibly to food security, nutrition, health, poverty alleviation, livelihoods and gender equality and the empowerment of women.

35. The value of the marine capture seafood production at the point of harvest is approximately 20 per cent of the global food fish market, valued at $400 billion (see A/69/71, para. 41). Capture fisheries and aquaculture provide about 4.3 billion people with about 15 per cent of their average per capita intake of animal protein.[47] In addition, the social dimension, including cultural aspects, of sustainable development features prominently in the context of fisheries, in particular small-

[42] See Security Council resolution 2184 (2014). See also Jens Vestergaard Madsen and others, *The State of Maritime Piracy 2013* (Oceans Beyond Piracy, 2014).

[43] See Oceans Beyond Piracy, "Seafarers — forgotten victims of piracy". Available from www.oceansbeyondpiracy.org/publications/seafarers-forgotten-victims-maritime-piracy.

[44] See www.imo.org/MediaCentre/HotTopics/SMD/Pages/default.aspx; see also the contributions of IHO, WMO, the Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and the secretariat of the Helsinki Commission.

[45] Contributions of the Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and the secretariat of the Helsinki Commission.

[46] See, for example, A/60/63, A/69/71 and also General Assembly resolution 69/109.

[47] Contribution of FAO.

scale fisheries.[48] For small island developing States, in particular, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture are among the main building blocks of a sustainable ocean-based economy.[49] For example, tuna resources are critical to the livelihood, economies and culture of many Pacific islanders.[50]

36. Capture fisheries and aquaculture contribute, either directly or indirectly, to over 200 million jobs globally.[51] FAO estimates that, overall, fisheries and aquaculture assure the livelihoods of 10 to 12 per cent of the world's population.[52] Moreover, Africa and Asia have shown sustained growth in the number of people engaged in capture fishing and even higher rates of increase in those engaged in fish farming.[52] Women accounted for more than 15 per cent of all people directly engaged in the fisheries primary sector in 2012, the proportion of women rising to 90 per cent in secondary activities (e.g., processing).[52]

37. However, the fisheries sector suffers around 24,000 human losses annually, underlining the urgent need to provide decent working conditions for fishers. Efforts are ongoing to address the issue.[53] Apart from the social impact, the improvement of working conditions is also important for ensuring the economic viability of this sector and protecting the marine environment.[54]

38. The crucial role fisheries can play in maintaining healthy marine ecosystems is attested to by the direct and indirect detrimental ecosystem effects of a wide range of unsustainable practices.[55] Overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices pose challenges to the health of marine ecosystems and the sustainability of resource exploitation (see A/69/71, sect. III.A). They can also have negative economic and social consequences, in particular on coastal communities and small-scale fisheries.[56] The contribution of fisheries to sustainable development can be improved by appropriately balancing economic, environmental and social considerations in fisheries management.[57] For example, it is estimated that rebuilding overfished stocks could increase fishery production by 16.5 million tons and annual revenue by $32 billion, which would certainly increase

[48] Christophe Béné, *Small-Scale Fisheries: Assessing their Contribution to Rural Livelihoods in Developing Countries*, FAO Fisheries Circular No. 1008 (Rome, FAO, 2006); see also Matthew Ansy, "Small-scale fisheries (SSF) in India", and Ammaj Siripetch and Sampan Panjarat, "Improved access to fisheries resources by small-scale fishers in the Andaman Sea by construction of artificial reefs", alumni contributions, available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[49] General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex.

[50] Contribution of the Forum Fisheries Agency.

[51] Contribution of FAO.

[52] FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012* (Rome, 2012).

[53] See contribution of ILO. See also A/69/71/Add.1. At the regional level, good practices for the protection of migrant fishers were discussed at the ILO Regional Meeting on Work in Fishing, held in Makassar, Indonesia, on 12 and 13 September 2013.

[54] Contribution of ILO.

[55] Contribution of FAO.

[56] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Why Fish Piracy Persists: The Economics of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2005); FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2014* (see footnote 25 above); International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), *Study on Fisheries Crime in the West African Coastal Region* (2014).

[57] Contribution of FAO.

the contribution of marine fisheries to the food security, economies and well-being of coastal communities.[55]

39. Several challenges remain in fully realizing the benefits of sustainable development and balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development in the context of fisheries. First and foremost, efforts should be made to ensure the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Fish Stocks Agreement and other relevant instruments.[58] Another challenge is the lack of capacity to develop and manage fisheries in a sustainable manner.[59] In addition, different States or stakeholders may have different objectives for a fishery on the basis of their perceptions of economic or social context and values.[59] Modernization also poses challenges since, in some cases, traditional knowledge and community-based resource management practices, which may provide the most appropriate and unique opportunities for achieving sustainable use of coastal and oceanic resources, may be abandoned or lost.[60]

40. At the global, regional and national levels, various ongoing fisheries-related initiatives are aimed at furthering the goal of achieving sustainable development by integrating its three dimensions, often explicitly considering socioeconomic aspects, including the dependency of coastal communities on such resources.[61] Issues covered in such initiatives include enhanced cooperation, including in enforcement activities,[62] cross-sectoral cooperation,[63] capacity-building[64] and the application of ecosystem and precautionary approaches.[65]

3. Exploitation of non-living resources

41. The sustainable exploitation of non-living resources can have direct economic and social benefits and the potential to contribute to other areas recognized as important for sustainable development, including energy and sustainable consumption and production patterns. For example, with regard to oil extraction, it is estimated that, for 2015, the total offshore oil production will be 26.7 million barrels per day,[66] constituting almost a third of the total oil production for the year.[67] Offshore deposits will continue to be an important source of oil and gas for years to come, given that, of the estimated 565 billion barrels of undiscovered conventional crude oil resources, almost two thirds are estimated to lie offshore, and almost three quarters of the estimated 167 billion barrels of undiscovered natural

[58] A/69/71/Add.1; FAO, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2014* (see footnote 25 above). It has been noted that, in some regional fisheries management organizations, the maximum sustainable yield is insufficiently qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors as required in article 61, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (contribution of the Forum Fisheries Agency).

[59] Contribution of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

[60] Contribution of the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

[61] See contributions of FAO, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, UNDP, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization and the European Union.

[62] Contribution of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission.

[63] Contribution of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization.

[64] Contributions of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation, the Forum Fisheries Agency and the United Nations University Fisheries Training Programme.

[65] Contributions of FAO, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization and the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization.

[66] See www.rystadenergy.com/.

[67] International Energy Agency, *Medium-term Oil Market Report 2015* (Paris, 2015).

gas liquids are offshore.[68] The potential of seabed mining is more difficult to estimate, as exploration is still under way. However, it is estimated that polymetallic nodules in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone alone potentially contain 17,500 million tons of manganese, 761 million tons of nickel, 669 million tons of copper and 134 million tons of cobalt.[69]

42. While the potential collateral environmental damage of unsustainable extraction, including through oil spills and habitat destruction, have attracted most of the attention, it is important to consider the social aspects as well.

43. Efforts have been taken to integrate environmental and social aspects into the operations of extractive industries.

44. Mining and oil and gas industry associations have placed great emphasis on the development and use of international standards to increase safety and reduce the environmental impact of operations.[70] This is a direct consequence of the growing impetus from various stakeholders, including Governments,[71] to integrate environmental, economic and social aspects through all phases of work in the extractive industries.

45. With regard to deep-sea mining, the work of the International Seabed Authority towards the development of a mining code to regulate prospecting, exploration and exploitation of marine minerals in the Area places emphasis on finding the optimum fiscal balance to provide sufficient profitability, while identifying the threshold standards for environmental and mining safety. The development of a code will also help determine whether exploitation can provide sufficient returns to benefit mankind as a whole, and respond to the real and perceived environmental concerns, before full-scale mining can commence.[72] Most notably, an environmental management plan for the Clarion-Clipperton Zone was issued by the Legal and Technical Commission of the Authority in 2011.[73] Also, studies are under way to investigate the potential environmental impacts of different mining technologies.[74]

46. Environmental concerns are also present in the regulation of offshore oil and gas installations. A number of provisions of international instruments concerning

[68] International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2014* (Paris, 2014).

[69] Charles Morgan, "A geological model of polymetallic nodule deposits in the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone", Briefing Paper 01/12 (Kingston, International Seabed Authority, 2012).

[70] See, for example, International Association of Oil and Gas Producers, Regulators' Use of Standards, at www.ogp.org.uk/pubs/426.pdf); International Council on Mining and Metals, Sustainable Development Framework (www.icmm.com/our-work/sustainable-development-framework); International Association of Drilling Contractors, Health, Safety and Environment Case Guidelines for offshore drilling rigs, at www.iadc.org/iadc-hse-case-guidelines).

[71] See, for example, Government of Australia, Leading Practice Sustainable Development Program for the Mining Industry (www.industry.gov.au/resource/Programs/LPSD/Pages/default.aspx).

[72] See International Seabed Authority, *Towards the Development of a Regulatory Framework for Polymetallic Nodule Exploitation in the Area*, Technical Study No. 11 (Kingston, 2013) (executive summary also available as ISBA/19/C/5).

[73] See ISBA/17/LTC/7.

[74] See www.jpi-oceans.eu/news-events/news/deep-sea-mining-what-are-risks-kick-meeting-pilot-action-impact-assessment.

dumping, pollution from ships and pollution from ballast water also apply to fixed and floating drilling rigs and other platforms.[75]

47. From a socioeconomic perspective, the oil and gas sector has the potential to create local value by providing employment and developing local value chains as a consequence of its operations. That potential is often harnessed thanks to local-content requirements, which obligate foreign oil and gas companies to source part of their work force, services and or materials in the countries where they operate.[67]

48. In the context of deep seabed mining, the Convention and the Part XI Agreement put into effect the common heritage of mankind as applied to the Area and its resources. This includes promoting cooperation in marine scientific research and transfer of technology and scientific knowledge to developing countries.[76]

49. The Deep Sea Minerals Project of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the European Union provides an example of the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.[77] The project aims at strengthening national efforts in favour of increased economic growth for the Pacific region while promoting national regulatory frameworks requiring environmental management and public participation and securing reasonable and equitable arrangements. The project, which has a strong focus on a multi-stakeholder approach and capacity-building, has led to the development of comprehensive national offshore policies and legislation for an integrated approach to the sustainable development of deep sea mineral resources.

4. Marine renewable energy

50. Marine renewable energy remains an untapped source of energy,[78] which as of 2010 represented less than 0.01 per cent of global energy consumption.[79] However, the potential of marine renewable energy is significant, with estimates of technically exploitable energy exceeding current and projected energy usage.[80] Just as renewable energy has the capacity to deliver multiple economic, environmental and social benefits,[1] marine renewables have a similar potential and have been considered, in detail, in the context of sustainable development.[81]

[75] For example, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto; the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004; and the 1996 Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972.

[76] Contribution of the International Seabed Authority.

[77] Contribution of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community; for further information see www.sopac.org/dsm/.

[78] See A/67/120 and A/67/79.

[79] S. G. Banerjee and others, *Global Tracking Framework*, vol. 3, *Sustainable Energy for All* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2013).

[80] See A/67/79, para. 18.

[81] The thirteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea addressed marine renewable energy as its topic of focus in 2012, including opportunities and challenges in the context of sustainable development (see A/67/120).

51. Access to energy is a fundamental factor of economic growth and human development, which are preconditions for poverty alleviation and the improvement of health, education, gender equality and environmental safety.[82] It is recognized, however, that the marine renewables sector is nascent and the potential of marine renewables is largely unproven pending further research and development.[83] Offshore wind generation, which is the most advanced of marine renewables,[83] typically has higher costs than fossil fuel-based power generation and other renewables such as land-based wind power generation.[84] However, costs vary depending upon site-specific factors, including availability of existing infrastructure, grid connection costs and local labour rates.[84] It is expected that offshore wind will be an increasing part of the energy mix as costs decrease.[84] The unbalanced state of utilization of marine renewables between developed and developing States has been noted and, in order to ensure access to marine renewables for all peoples, calls have been made for capacity-building and technology transfer (see A/67/120).

52. Marine renewable energy can, if proven, contribute to the supply of affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy in the future. It can also yield socioeconomic benefits, including poverty eradication, sustainable growth, reduced inequality, and increased employment opportunities. It also contributes to mitigation efforts in relation to climate change by offering low- and no-carbon footprint alternatives to fossil fuels.

5. Laying of submarine cables

53. Submarine cables are critical communications infrastructure, being used for more than 98 per cent of international Internet, data and telephone traffic, with only a few States being without fibre connectivity, and many of these having cable projects currently under way.[85] Submarine cables are recognized as vitally important to the global economy[86] and hence to economic growth. By underpinning international communications, their role in providing access to data and information for all peoples is evident.

54. The environmental dimension of submarine cables is, however, less apparent. Submarine cables themselves are considered to have a low-carbon footprint and a small relative impact on the environment, with the maintenance of submarine cables causing the highest impacts as a result of the operation of the cable ships themselves.[87] Submarine cables have the potential to be contribute actively to disaster warning and addressing climate change, with work under way to examine the potential for monitoring purposes.[88]

[82] O. Edenhofer and others, *Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation: Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[83] See A/67/120 and A/67/79.

[84] International Renewable Energy Agency, *Renewable Power Generation Costs in 2014* (2015).

[85] D. Burnett, D. Freestone and E. Davenport, "Submarine cables in the Sargasso Sea: legal and environmental issues in areas beyond national jurisdiction", report of a workshop held in Washington, D.C., on 23 October 2014 (2015).

[86] See General Assembly resolution 69/245.

[87] C. Donovan, "Twenty thousand leagues under the sea: a life cycle assessment of fibre optic submarine cable systems" (Stockholm, 2009).

[88] See A/67/79/Add.1 and A/69/71/Add.1. See also www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/climatechange/task-force-sc/Pages/default.aspx.

55. Functioning as the backbone of the international telecommunications system, submarine cables are a fundamental component of the critical global infrastructure and play a direct role in sustainable industrialization; indirectly they contribute to all other areas recognized as important for sustainable development.

6. Tourism

56. Over the last 50 years, tourism has become one of the largest economic sectors in the world, accounting for an estimated 9 per cent of world GDP.[89] Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing global tourism markets, encouraging tourist locations to actively develop their cultural assets.[89] The growth in tourism has been especially significant in developing and least developed countries, where it is one of the principal sources of foreign exchange and often the most viable and sustainable economic development option.[89] For example, tourism was a main factor in the recent advancement of Botswana, Cabo Verde and Maldives from their status as least developed countries.[89]

57. It is recognized that well designed and managed tourism can make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development.[90] Sustainable tourism, can, in particular, contribute to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (see A/68/278). It may also have beneficial effects on livelihoods and infrastructure development.

58. Sustainable tourism is based on visitors seeking to experience intact and clean environments and attractive natural areas.[91] This provides incentives for host countries to protect and preserve their environments. The past few decades have seen a substantial growth in coastal ecotourism,[91] which encourages increased protection of coastal ecological attractions, such as coral reefs and marine wildlife, including through marine parks and pollution control measures.

59. Despite its positive potential, tourism can also have a number of negative impacts. For example, it is a significant and growing contributor to carbon dioxide emissions, a growing cause of pollution of land and sea and a major user of non-renewable resources.[91] In addition, the economic benefits of the sector do not necessarily accrue to local populations, as illustrated by cruise tourism, one of the fastest growing segments of tourism. The foreign cruise ship companies enjoy most of the economic benefits, while many of the costs are borne by the port cities and their local populations.[92] On the social front, tourism can also lead to socioeconomic stratification, strained public services and infrastructure and resource conflicts, among others.[93]

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[89] World Tourism Organization, *Sustainable Tourism for Development Guidebook* (Madrid, 2013) (available from www.unwto.org/ebook/sustainable-tourism-for-development/).

[90] See General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

[91] John Davenport and Julia L. Davenport, "The impact of tourism and personal leisure transport on coastal environments: a review", *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*, vol. 67, Nos. 1-2 (2006).

[92] Juan Gabriel Brida and Sandra Zapata, "Cruise tourism: economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts", *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing*, vol. 1, No. 3 (2010).

[93] Bruce Epler, "Tourism, the economy, population growth, and conservation in Galapagos" (2007).

60. In order for tourism to make a positive contribution to sustainable development, it is crucial that it be sustainable itself and take full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.[94]

7. Natural and cultural heritage

61. The preservation of natural and cultural heritage sites can promote balance among the economic, social and environmental aspects of development, if all three aspects are integrated. Such sites can contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and protection of historical or archaeological sites and their integrity, thereby sustaining societies that depend on them and their economic activities.

62. However, if measures solely protect the environment from disturbance by people, some local groups may be losing their traditional fishing grounds, natural habitat and cultural identity.[95] The protection of natural or cultural sites must occur in parallel with the safekeeping of societal traditions and practices and the preservation of the sites' role as a source of economic revenue, in order to ensure sustainable development. For example, small-scale fisheries or traditional practices can be an integral part of the community lifestyle, incorporating skills, knowledge and values that have roots in the natural environment and coastal societies.[96] Successful examples of the environmental, social and economic benefits of the preservation of underwater cultural heritage include the "Gaiola" and "Baia" underwater parks in Italy, which include Roman structures of great archaeological interest.[97]

8. Conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity

63. In addition to its intrinsic value, biodiversity is the basis for many of the ecosystem services provided by the oceans, including supporting, provisioning, regulating and cultural services, which are critical foundations for sustainable development and human well-being (see paras. 9-13 above).[98] The importance of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, both within and beyond national jurisdiction, for sustainable development has been repeatedly recognized.[99] In particular, the significant economic, social and environmental contributions of coral

[94] UNEP and World Tourism Organization, *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers* (2005).

[95] See "The Wadden Sea fishing community, a tangible and intangible heritage?", available from www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/news/dettaglio_news.lasso?-idn=126.

[96] A. Rim-Rukeh, G. Irerhievwie and J. E. Agbozu, "Traditional beliefs and conservation of natural resources: evidences from selected communities in Delta State, Nigeria", *International Journal of Biodiversity and Conservation*, vol. 5, No. 7 (2013).

[97] Gonzalo Rodriguez Prado, "Underwater cultural heritage: public-private partnership example", alumni contribution. Available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[98] See, for example, General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex; see also Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development, adopted at the high-level segment of the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity on 16 October 2014, available from www.cbd.int/cop12/hls.shtml.

[99] See General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

reefs, especially to islands and other coastal States, have been highlighted,[100] as has the value of marine genetic resources.[101] Biodiversity and the related traditional knowledge are particularly important for the sustainable livelihoods of indigenous and local communities as well as vulnerable groups (see paras. 79-83 below).[102]

64. The production and consumption patterns for food, energy and shelter resulting from an increasing global population, as well as unsustainable resource extraction, pollution, the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification, invasive alien species and habitat destruction are among the several causes and drivers of marine biodiversity loss. At the same time, marine biodiversity loss undermines sustainable economic growth and social development as well as poverty eradication by affecting the continued provision of many ecosystem services provided by the oceans.[103]

65. A number of initiatives at global and regional levels have been undertaken to promote, inter alia, mainstreaming of the consideration of the socioeconomic impacts and benefits of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its components into relevant programmes and policies;[104] integrated planning and management (see paras. 89-101 below), in particular with regard to coral reefs; and community-based measures.[105] In light of the role that economic valuation may have in raising awareness of the economic benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services and consequently fostering conservation and sustainable use, work is also being carried out in that regard.[106] The role of access to genetic resources, and of sharing the benefits derived from their use, in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability has also been recognized and measures taken to promote it.[107]

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[100] See General Assembly resolutions 66/194 and 66/288, annex. The Micronesia Challenge, the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape project, the Caribbean Challenge and the Coral Triangle Initiative (see resolution 69/245, para. 230) recognize the significant economic, social and environmental contributions of coral reefs, in particular to the development of islands States and other coastal States.

[101] See General Assembly resolution 69/245 and A/62/66. An OECD report noted that marine biotechnology might help to address the global challenges of food, energy security and health and contribute to green growth and sustainable industries. It also indicated that the global market for marine biotechnology products and processes was believed to offer a significant and growing economic opportunity, with an estimated global market for marine biotechnology of €2.8 billion (2010 estimate), with a compound annual growth rate of 4 to 5 per cent (or 10 to 12 per cent under less conservative assumptions) (OECD, *Marine Biotechnology: Enabling Solutions for Ocean Productivity and Sustainability* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2013)).

[102] See Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development (available from www.cbd.int/cop12/hls.shtml) and General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

[103] See General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, and the Chennai guidance for the integration of biodiversity and poverty eradication (UNEP/CBD/COP/12/29, decision XII/5, annex); see also Paul L. Lucas and others, "Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem services in the post-2015 development agenda: goal structure, target areas and means of implementation", *Sustainability*, vol. 6, No. 1 (2014).

[104] See Chennai guidance for the integration of biodiversity and poverty eradication (UNEP/CBD/COP/12/29, decision XII/5, annex); see also information material available from www.cbd.int/development/default.shtml.

[105] See contributions of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, the International Coral Reef Initiative and UNEP.

[106] Contribution of the International Coral Reef Initiative.

[107] See Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development (available from www.cbd.int/cop12/hls.shtml); see also contribution of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

66. Effective integration is still hampered by a number of challenges. In particular, there is a need to strengthen efforts towards the effective implementation of relevant international instruments, as well as cooperation in capacity-building and transfer of technology. A better understanding of the causes and drivers of biodiversity loss that exacerbate poverty is also critical.[108] In addition, existing knowledge, including traditional knowledge, appears to be underused in decision-making at all levels.[109] Significant investments are required for scaling up successful approaches.[110] Greater emphasis on the links between biodiversity loss and consumption choices may also be beneficial in bringing about sustainable consumption patterns.[109] While approaches linked to economic benefits, such as environmentally friendly and culturally responsible tourism (see paras. 56-60 above) or payments for ecosystem services, may help in meeting the costs of conservation[109] and also benefit local communities and women (see paras. 79-84 below),[110] challenges remain. For example, it is thought that, in order to bring about a change in behaviour, economic valuation must be accompanied by supporting public policies that either reward positive individual actions or disincentivize harm.[111] In addition, any economic assessment should include a thorough accounting of market and non-market values. Given the difficulty of valuing less tangible or quantifiable non-market values, there is a need for additional socioeconomic and environmental indicators.[112] The existence of an appropriate institutional and governance framework for designing and implementing payments, together with the associated monitoring and regulation, are critical to the success of such initiatives.[109]

9. Oceans and climate change and ocean acidification

67. Climate change, including its impacts on oceans, and ocean acidification affect all States and undermine their ability, in particular that of developing countries, to achieve sustainable development and threaten the viability and survival of nations.[113] Sea level rise, loss of polar ice, extreme weather events, ocean warming and acidification are causing, inter alia, destruction of property and loss of lives, changing coastlines, coral bleaching, displacement of fish stocks and ecosystem degradation, all of which affect the food security, livelihood and development of communities in both developing and developed States. The opening of new navigational routes, for example in the Arctic region, as a result of climate change may have a positive impact on international trade. However, the environmental and social impacts also need to be considered.[114]

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[108] See UNEP document, UNEP/CBD/COP/12/29, decisions XII/4 and XII/5, annex.

[109] Michael R. W. Rands and others, "Biodiversity conservation: challenges beyond 2010", *Science*, vol. 329, No. 5997 (2010).

[110] See Laely Nurhidayah, "Conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity", alumni contribution, available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm; see also the case studies on marine and coastal biodiversity provided on the website of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (www.cbd.int/case-studies/default.shtml).

[111] Michael R. W. Rands et al.

[112] OECD, *Marine Biotechnology* (see footnote 112 above).

[113] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex. See also A/69/71 and Add.1.

[114] See also Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability — Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014), chap. 6.

68. Actions targeting the causes of climate change and ocean acidification, in particular cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, are essential to addressing the above challenges. At the same time, the importance of maintaining healthy marine and coastal ecosystems to ensure their continued climate change mitigation and adaptation functions, as well as building resilience to ocean acidification, cannot be overstated, especially in view of the link to poverty eradication, food security and sustainable economic growth. Action aimed at the management of climate-related coastal and marine hazards is also of major importance in view of the critical impediment they pose to social and economic development and poverty eradication.[115] Also crucial is the strengthening of capacity, particularly in small island developing States, for the collection of climate data and information for early warning and disaster risk reduction.[116]

69. In addition, the development of marine renewable energies (see paras. 50-52 above) could foster increased energy security, generate employment and play a role in mitigating the impacts of climate change (see A/67/120).

70. Coastal wetlands (salt marshes, mangroves and sea-grass beds) provide a good example of ecosystems which support coastal development and function as important carbon sinks, absorbing and holding large quantities of carbon dioxide.[117] It is estimated that, annually, these ecosystems sequester carbon at a rate two to four times greater than mature tropical forests and store three to five times more carbon per equivalent area than tropical forests.[118] These coastal habitats also provide rich fishing grounds for coastal communities, support nutrient recycling and shoreline stabilization and provide storm protection and flood attenuation, hence providing essential ecosystem services for food security, sustainable livelihoods, disaster reduction and adaptation to climate change. These ecosystems are under increasing pressure from coastal development projects, to the extent that globally about 35 per cent of mangroves have disappeared since 1980. With their destruction, ecosystem services are lost and large quantities of stored carbon dioxide are emitted as a result of the oxidization of organic sediments and biomass. Better protecting the world's fast-disappearing coastal wetlands could have economic, social and environmental benefits, while at the same time providing quantifiable mitigation outcomes, which may also generate capital through climate finance mechanisms.[119]

B. Addressing vulnerabilities

71. Owing to their particular vulnerabilities, certain States and groups are particularly challenged in their efforts to achieve sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection. In "The future we want" (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), States recognized that each country

[115] Contribution of WMO.

[116] Contribution of the Economic Commission for Africa.

[117] T. Hiraishi and others, eds., *2013 Supplement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories: Wetlands* (Geneva, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2014).

[118] B. C. Murray and others, "Green payments for blue carbon: economic incentives for protecting threatened coastal habitats", Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions report, NI-R-11-04 (Durham, North Carolina, Duke University, 2011).

[119] UNEP and the Center for International Forestry Research, "Guiding principles for delivering coastal wetland carbon projects" (Nairobi and Bogor, Indonesia, 2014).

faced specific challenges to achieve sustainable development and underscored the special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States. It was further recognized that countries in situations of conflict needed special attention.

72. Despite the growing understanding of the importance of disaster risk reduction and increased disaster response capacities,[120] the vulnerabilities of all States to various shocks and disasters, and the need for mitigating, preparing for and building resilience against such risks, remain a global concern. Such shocks and disasters include environmental risks, such as extreme weather events, sea level rise and major biodiversity loss; economic risks, such as energy price shocks, fiscal and/or financial crisis and high structural unemployment; and social risks, such as conflicts, civil unrest, food crises and rapid and massive spread of infectious diseases.[121]

73. Global risks are interconnected. The occurrence of any major shock or disaster in any area has the potential to cause other shocks, as well as long-term consequences for affected States and individuals and the world economy. The manifestations of global risks are often regional, national or local. Hence, tailored approaches at each of those levels are often necessary to account for variations in transnational, national and local vulnerabilities in building mitigation strategies.[122]

74. In the context of oceans, it is of paramount importance to work towards mitigation of and preparation for risks associated with extreme weather events, such as hurricanes and tsunamis, as well as those associated with climate change and sea level rise.[123] Of particular concern in that regard are the unique and particular vulnerabilities of small island developing States. Adaptation to the effects of climate change represents an immediate and urgent global priority for all States given the challenges it poses to sustainable development.[124]

75. *African States*. The 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy notes that Africa's oceans and seas are under pressure from various threats such as crimes at sea, degradation of the marine environment, loss of biodiversity and aggravated effects of climate change.[125] The decision of the Assembly of the African Union at its twenty-second ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa on 30 and 31 January 2014, to adopt the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy and to retain 2015 to 2025 as the "Decade of African Seas and Oceans" represents an opportunity for integrated sustainable development of the oceans by African States at both the regional and national levels.[126] The recently adopted Africa Agenda 2063 recognizes the important role of the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy in facilitating sustainable development

[120] See, for example, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, as well as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (A/CONF.224/1, 2).

[121] For a comprehensive list of global risks see World Economic Forum, *Global Risks 2015*, 10th ed. (Geneva, 2015).

[122] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2014: Sustaining Human Progress — Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience* (New York, 2014); Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Climate Change 2014: (see footnote 115 above).

[123] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

[124] General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex.

[125] See http://pages.au.int/maritime/documents/2050-aim-strategy-0.

[126] See http://au.int/en/content/addis-ababa-30-31-january-2014-%E2%80%93-assembly-african-union-twenty-second-ordinary-session.

on the continent and expresses the aspiration for Africa to be a continent with the sustainable use, equitable sharing of benefits and conservation of its vast natural and marine resources, including the "blue economy". It includes a chapter to guide the continent's pursuit of a blue economy development model for African small island developing States.[127]

76. *Least developed countries*. Maritime traffic constitutes the main transport mode through which most least developed countries conduct international trade.[128] However, container dwell times in the ports of some African least developed countries range from 12 to 15 days, above the international practice of seven days. Highway networks have been developed or are being developed to facilitate transport, including for least developed countries. The Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) recognizes the importance of marine and coastal resources and of access to the sea for the economic growth of least developed countries; it also refers to the utilization of tidal energy to increase the capacity for energy generation in least developed countries.[129]

77. *Landlocked developing countries*. The average distance to a seaport for landlocked developing countries is 1,370 km.[130] Despite an overall trend in reduced export delays, it takes an average of 43 days to export from landlocked developing countries. This is reportedly more than twice the time required to export from coastal developing countries and 20 days more than the time required to export from transit countries.[131] In 2011, landlocked developing countries' exports accounted for 1.2 per cent of world exports and their total share in global trade was 1.17 per cent, showing continued marginalization of the group of countries in the world economy.[130] In recognition of the special situation of landlocked developing countries and geographically disadvantaged States, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea devotes an entire section to their needs. The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024,[132] adopted during the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, held in Vienna from 3 to 5 November 2014, highlighted the key role that freedom of transit and transit facilities play in the overall development of landlocked developing countries through full integration into the global trading system.[133] A number of transit cooperation agreements including transport corridors have been concluded, such as in Asia and Africa.[133] The General Assembly, in its resolution 69/245, noted the need for cooperation to address the development needs and challenges faced by landlocked developing countries associated with, inter alia, their lack of direct

[127] Contribution of the Economic Commission for Africa.

[128] Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, *State of the Least Developed Countries 2014: Follow-up of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries* (2014).

[129] See http://unohrlls.org/about-ldcs/istanbul-programme-of-action/.

[130] Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, "Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)", Factsheet (2013).

[131] Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, *The Development Economics of Landlockedness: Understanding the Development Costs of Being Landlocked* (2013).

[132] General Assembly resolution 69/137, annex II.

[133] Ibid. See also contribution of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets, in line with the objectives of the Vienna Programme of Action.

78. *Small island developing States*. Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, coastal tourism, the possible use of seabed resources and potential sources of renewable energy are among the main building blocks of a sustainable ocean-based economy in small island developing States.[134] Challenges include limited economic capacity and knowledge, resource management, climate change and sea level rise and growing populations.[135] Particular challenges also remain for Pacific small island developing States in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, which stem in part from geographic remoteness from main trade partners, limited volumes of trade, heavy reliance on imports and low volumes of exports highly concentrated in a few products.[136] The effective participation of small island developing States in global trade requires addressing both port facilities and trade logistics in order to develop a sustainable transport system,[136] as well as increased capacity-building and improved transfer of technologies. In the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), States reaffirmed the status of small island developing States as a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities. They recognized the significant challenges that small island developing States face in the attainment of sustainable development goals and highlighted the crucial importance of international cooperation and partnerships to that end.[137] A number of activities have been undertaken by Pacific small island developing States related to maritime boundaries, oceanic fisheries, coastal fisheries and deep sea mining aimed at strengthening policies, legal frameworks, institutions and management measures at the national level,[138] including fostering the use of traditional knowledge and community-based resource management practices, ecosystem-based management and adaptation of ocean and island natural resources (ridge-to-reef, integrated island management).[139]

79. *Vulnerable groups*. Vulnerable groups include, but are not limited to, the poor, migrants, refugees, displaced persons, women, children and indigenous groups, and others who experience "exposure to contingencies and stress, and difficulty in coping with them".[140] The deterioration of coastal and marine ecosystems and habitats is negatively affecting human well-being worldwide, with more severe and immediate impacts on the poor and vulnerable, women, children and indigenous peoples owing, inter alia, to their oftentimes high dependency on natural resources.

80. Impoverished people are more likely to take dangerous jobs at sea. Small-scale fishers, in particular in small island developing States, are particularly vulnerable to environmental impacts and high occupational risk, with few alternative livelihoods.[141]

[134] Contribution of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

[135] Contribution of the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

[136] *Review of Maritime Transport 2014* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.II.D.5). See also contribution of ECA.

[137] General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex.

[138] Contribution of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

[139] Contribution of the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

[140] Christophe Béné, *Small-Scale Fisheries: Assessing their Contribution to Rural Livelihoods in Developing Countries* (see footnote 48 above).

[141] Contribution of FAO.

They are also exposed to natural disasters[142] and violence, among others.[140] Integrated management of social, economic and environmental systems underpinning small-scale fisheries can mitigate these risks (see paras. 34-40 above).[143]

81. Indigenous peoples may sometimes not be involved in decision-making about development policies.[144] The international community is increasingly attentive to the need to recognize the cultural relationships of indigenous peoples to the oceans and their resources (see paras. 17 and 61-62 above) and the need to obtain their consent for commercially exploitative activities that might affect them.[145]

82. Persisting gender gaps relative to women's economic positions, their dominant role in the care economy and their increased likelihood of participating in the informal economy may cause women's contributions to sustainable development to be undervalued.[146] Yet, evidence suggests that investing in food enterprises owned by women could narrow the resource gap and improve food security, and that women's participation in trade and services has contributed not only to their own economic empowerment, but also to national competitiveness.[147] For example, women constitute the majority of those engaged in secondary activities related to marine fisheries and marine aquaculture, such as fish processing and marketing (see also para. 36 above).

83. As indicated in paragraph 14 above, migrants can contribute to economic growth and social development. However, they are also vulnerable. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers travelling by sea in an irregular situation are especially at risk of human rights abuses by traffickers and smugglers.[148] Work is ongoing to promote better coordination and cooperation in combatting transnational crime, including trafficking and smuggling.[149]

[142] Contribution of ECA.

[143] Matthew Ansy, "Small scale fisheries (SSF) in India", alumni contribution, available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[144] Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, "Indigenous peoples' participation in decisions impacting community, land, culture critical to their human rights, speakers tell Permanent Forum", 22 May 2013, available from www.un.org/press/en/2013/hr5134.doc.htm; see also Yetunde F. Agbeja, "Sustaining livelihood through community managed fishing license banks: the case of First Nations of British Columbia", alumni contribution, available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[145] See "Pacific Declaration of the Preparatory Meeting for Pacific Indigenous Peoples on the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples", held in Sydney, Australia, from 19 to 21 March 2013. Available from www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/WCIP-Pacific-Statement-Outcome-Document.pdf.

[146] Willemijn de Jong, "The female face of sustainable development", paper prepared for the library briefing at the European Parliament on 8 April 2013. Available from www.europarl.europa.eu/eplibrary/The-female-face-of-sustainable-development.pdf.

[147] United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), "The future women want: a vision of sustainable development for all" (2012).

[148] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Human rights at international borders: exploring gaps in policy and practice", background paper prepared for the expert consultation held on 22 and 23 March 2012. Available from www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/Events/HumanRightsatInternationalBorders_backgroundpaper2012.pdf.

[149] Contribution of UNODC. The UNODC Maritime Crime Programme has developed an Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime to share information and strategies, and collaborate in investigating and prosecuting, maritime crimes, including trafficking and smuggling of persons. See also A/69/71/Add.1.

84. Activities to benefit vulnerable people have, for example, focused on youth and women,[150] migrants[149] and the empowerment of fishing communities as a non-conventional measure to address armed robbery against ships.[151]

C. Enabling framework for enhanced integration of the three dimensions in relation to oceans

85. While the challenges are many, opportunities exist to enhance integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development with a view to achieving "triple wins" (see para. 2 above). Continuing efforts to address the global drivers of change which have negative effects on national and local economies, on social systems and on the marine environment and exacerbate vulnerabilities are critical. At the same time, developing the elements that constitute the basic enabling framework for integration, some of which are outlined below, is essential.

1. Legal framework

86. The development and implementation of a supporting legal framework at the national level, in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, can play a critical role in achieving successful integration. The Convention is recognized as the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. As noted in paragraph 5 above, the Convention reflects the interrelatedness of the environmental, social and economic aspects of the oceans. The role of the Convention with regard to the integration of those three dimensions is even greater by virtue of the fact that it is a framework instrument. As such, its provisions are complemented by its two implementing agreements (see para. 20 above) as well as by other instruments in various sectors. This normative integration finds explicit recognition in the provisions of the Convention itself.[152] The effective implementation of the Convention and its implementing agreements would, therefore, advance the achievement of sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection and further the goal of integration. This is also recognized in goal 14 in the proposal of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970 and Corr.1), which puts emphasis on ensuring "the full implementation of international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea for States parties thereto, including, where applicable, existing regional and international regimes for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by their parties". The General Assembly has also consistently emphasized that capacity-building is essential to ensure that States, especially developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as coastal African States, are able to fully implement the Convention, benefit from the sustainable development of the oceans and seas and participate fully in global and regional forums on ocean affairs and the law of the sea[153] (see also para. 75 above).

[150] Contribution of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

[151] Senia Febrica, "Empowerment of coastal communities as a non-conventional measure to address armed robbery against ships, Indonesia", alumni contribution. Available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[152] See, for example, articles 197 and 282.

[153] See, for example, General Assembly resolution 69/245.

87. In that regard, it is important to bear in mind that the Convention also indirectly contributes to the three dimensions and their integration by providing the tools that promote, inter alia, the legal certainty stemming from precise jurisdictional entitlements, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the suppression of criminal activities at sea and the transfer of technology (see paras. 106-110 below).

88. For example, clearly defined and publicized limits of maritime zones under national jurisdiction are an essential basis for peace and security and the sustainable management of activities and resources, as they provide certainty with regard to the extent of the sovereignty or sovereign rights and jurisdiction of coastal States. Such certainty has an impact on the effectiveness of an integrated approach to oceans. However, a significant number of maritime boundaries have not been settled, thereby preventing some States from fully and effectively deriving benefits from the oceans. In response, in some cases, States have negotiated temporary provisional arrangements for joint exploration exploitation of resources pending more permanent solutions.[154]

2. Integration at the policy, planning and management levels

89. The General Assembly has consistently acknowledged that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole through an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach, and reaffirmed the need to improve cooperation and coordination at the national, regional and global levels, in accordance with the Convention, to support and supplement the efforts of each State in promoting the implementation and observance of the Convention and the integrated management and sustainable development of the oceans and seas.[153]

90. Cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination among different Government ministries and agencies in relation to ocean issues can foster more integrated consideration and decision-making, reflecting a broad range of interests and viewpoints.

91. Efforts to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development have been demonstrated in the adoption and implementation of integrated national ocean policies in several countries, including those aimed at developing sustainable ocean-based economies or "blue growth".[155] In some countries, integration has included establishing an inter-agency coordination body overseeing the implementation of an

[154] *Handbook on the Delimitation of Maritime Boundaries* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.V.2).

[155] See www.ioc-unesco.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=362&Itemid=100036. See also case study by Laely Nurhidayah, "Conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity", alumni contribution, available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

ocean policy.[156] At the regional level, the European Union and the African Union (see para. 75 above), among others, have adopted integrated maritime policies.[157]

92. Institutional mechanisms are needed to harness socioeconomic and environmental knowledge for decision-making and to ensure the administration, implementation and monitoring of integrated policies. Fragmentation and lack of cooperation and coordination represent one of the main challenges to institutional effectiveness at all levels.[158] Cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination and sustainable development of oceans and seas are therefore intertwined. Opportunities remain in terms of capacity development and institutional strengthening to ensure cooperation and collaboration between different government institutions in implementation of national strategies and plans,[159] including the development and implementation of national ocean policies and mechanisms for integrated coastal management.

93. *Participatory approaches*. Participatory approaches play a key role in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in oceans law and policy by ensuring that a broad range of interests are represented and economic, environmental and social considerations are taken into account at all levels of decision-making and governance. Sustainable development must, therefore, be inclusive and people-centred, benefiting and involving all relevant stakeholders.[160]

94. Effective participation by the broadest possible range of States in decision-making that affects them is very important. In this regard, international legal instruments, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Fish Stocks Agreement, recognize the need for participation by all States, including developing States, in the management of oceans and their resources and highlight the importance of capacity-building and transfer of technology to support such participation.

95. Poor stakeholder participation is one of the critical factors exacerbating ineffective fisheries governance and management, which is at the heart of decline in fisheries resources.[161] A number of international instruments call for participatory approaches, including the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, which propose

[156] See, for example, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Northern Ireland Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (establishing the Marine Management Organisation); the Basic Act on Ocean Policy of Japan (establishing the Headquarters for Ocean Policy); and the United States of America Executive Order of 19 July 2010 on Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts and the Great Lakes (establishing the National Ocean Council).

[157] See the integrated maritime policy of the European Union, including directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive); and the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy and Plan of Action adopted by the African Union. See also case study by Nicole Parris, "The Caribbean Sea Commission (CSC): working toward the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea", alumni contribution, available from http://www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[158] See OECD, *Sustainable Development: Critical Issues* (Paris, 2001).

[159] Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and UNDP, "Synthesis of national reports for Rio+20" (2012).

[160] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

[161] Contribution of FAO.

guidance for the enhancement of sustainable small-scale fisheries governance and development.[162]

96. Moreover, participatory approaches are already incorporated in various forums and processes for the development of ocean law and policy at the global, regional and national levels. At the global level, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, industry groups and media, play an important role through their participation in ocean- and sustainable development-related meetings, such as the Informal Consultative Process and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The International Labour Organization's tripartite structure and approach presents a unique example, bringing together Governments, employers and workers to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes.[163] The Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity encouraged the use of the traditional, scientific, technical and technological knowledge of indigenous and local communities at the national level, with their full and effective participation, and requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate participation of such groups, including fisheries communities, in regional or subregional workshops on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas.[164]

97. At the national level, the participation of various stakeholders in decision-making processes has been key to considering different interests and perspectives.[165] At the local level, participation of coastal communities and small-scale and artisanal fishers in decision-making about resource management and land and maritime area usage may help achieve a balance of economic, social and environmental considerations.

98. Another key aspect of participatory approaches is the sharing of benefits derived from the oceans and their resources. The importance of benefit-sharing in the maritime context has been recognized through, for example, the principle of the common heritage of mankind, the recognition of the special requirements of developing States,[166] the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the recognition of participatory rights in regional fisheries management organizations and

[162] Ibid. See also Yetunde E. Agbeja, "Sustaining livelihood through community managed fishing license banks: the case of First Nations of British Columbia"; Amnaj Siripetch and Sampan Panjarat, "Improved access to fisheries resources by small-scale fishers in the Andaman Sea by construction of artificial reefs"; and L. Ylenia Randrianarisoa, "Towards participatory approach for local and traditional system legalization applied on fisheries resources management: the social convention drafting and implementation for sustainable development (the South-West of Madagascar case)", alumni contributions, available fromwww.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[163] Contribution of ILO.

[164] Contribution of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

[165] See, for example, Belgium, Royal Decree of 20 March 2014 (www.health.belgium.be/filestore/19094275/Summary%20Marine%20Spatial%20Plan.pdf); and the integrated management plans adopted by Norway for the Lofoten-Barents Sea, Norwegian Sea, and the North Sea and Skagerrak area (www.fisheries.no/resource_management/Area_management/Integrated_management_plans/#.VPTTQS6eom8).

[166] Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (the Fish Stocks Agreement), art. 24.

arrangements.[167] In the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", States committed themselves "to observe the need to ensure access to fisheries and the importance of access to markets, by subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fisherfolk and women fish workers, as well as indigenous peoples and their communities, particularly in developing countries, especially small island developing States".[168]

99. *Management tools*. Progress continues to be made in the development and application of various integrated tools to manage the impacts of human activities on marine ecosystems. Integrated approaches to the management of human activities in the oceans and seas include ecosystem approaches, integrated coastal zone management and marine spatial planning. A previous meeting of the Informal Consultative Process focused on ecosystem approaches (see A/61/156), which have been applied in single sectors (e.g., fisheries management)[169] as well as in a cross-sectoral manner.[170] Integrated coastal zone management is a continuous and dynamic process, which, among others, aims to achieve intersectoral, intergovernmental and spatial integration as well as the integration of science and management.[171]

100. Marine spatial planning aims at enabling informed planning of the uses of ocean space and resources through the application of a number of management tools such as ecosystem assessments, strategic environmental assessment, area-based management tools, such as marine protected areas,[171] and ecosystem service valuation in trade-off analysis. It promotes broad and transparent stakeholder engagement.[172] While still in the early stages of implementation, marine spatial planning offers opportunities for coordination between sea and land planning, resolution of user conflicts, increased focus on performance monitoring and evaluation and stakeholders' participation. Based on experience at the national level, marine spatial planning is increasingly being promoted as a useful integrated approach at the regional and global levels.[172]

101. Environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments that assess cumulative impacts can also support the implementation of integrated approaches.[173] As yet, models of how to assess cumulative impacts and their interactions with the ecosystem are in their infancy and vary from country to country and region to region. This remains a major challenge to an integrated approach to

[167] Ibid., art. 11.

[168] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, para. 175.

[169] See, for example, www.fao.org/fishery/topic/16034/en and www.fao.org/fishery/topic/16035/en (FAO ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture); UNEP document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/35, annex I, decision XI/18; and the contributions of FAO and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

[170] See, for example, European Union, Marine Strategy Framework Directive (footnote 157 above); Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy (http://www.ospar.org/html_documents/ospar/html/10-03e_nea_environment_strategy.pdf); the Baltic Sea Action Plan of the Helsinki Commission (http://helcom.fi/baltic-sea-action-plan); the UNDP Sustainable Ocean Management Programme; and the projects and programmes of the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme concerning, among others, ecosystem-based management and adaptation of ocean and island natural resources.

[171] See A/57/57 and A/57/80.

[172] Contributions of UNEP, IOC, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the European Union and the Helsinki Commission.

[173] See, for example, A/66/119, A/67/95, A/69/82 and A/69/177.

managing human activities in the marine environment.[174] In this regard, ongoing marine science initiatives (see paras. 104 and 105 below), particularly the first global integrated assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socioeconomic aspects (see para. 105 below), would contribute to the enhancement of the understanding of cumulative impacts and their interactions with the ecosystem.

3. Marine science

102. Understanding the economic and social benefits and costs of human activity in the marine environment is essential, as is an understanding of the linkage between human activities and pressures and the associated impacts on the ecosystem in interaction with natural environmental change.[174] In that regard, sound data, information and knowledge are critical for informed decision-making and for monitoring progress in meeting internationally agreed commitments (see para. 131 below).

103. The data obtained from marine scientific research and its supporting technologies can improve knowledge of various drivers of change. Marine science can, therefore, make a major contribution to eliminating poverty, ensuring food security, supporting sustainable management of activities at sea, protecting the marine environment and predicting, mitigating and responding to the impacts of natural events and disasters. In order to do so effectively, marine science needs to be mainstreamed into decision-making and be interdisciplinary and intersectoral, including through an increased appreciation of the ocean/atmosphere interface and the connection between land and ocean.[175]

104. Numerous organizations, agencies and collaborative endeavours collect information and data for their particular sectoral use.[176] However, the effective application of marine scientific knowledge and technology in an integrated manner requires the development of the appropriate national and regional approaches and mechanisms to overcome current challenges relating to, inter alia, lack of cohesion among particular scientific disciplines, and to produce aggregated, integrated and coherent datasets supporting statistics and indicators for oceans and seas (see paras. 129 and 130 below).[177] Such efforts could contribute to increasing integration of information on the variables that affect ocean health, human well-being and economic growth, and consequently ensure that decisions drawing on marine science take, where applicable, full account of environmental and socioeconomic factors, including traditional knowledge.[178]

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[174] Contribution of the Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic.

[175] A/56/121. See also General Assembly resolution 69/245.

[176] See for example, the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (http://www.iode.org/), which facilitates the exchange of oceanographic data and information, in particular through its Ocean Data and Information Networks and Ocean Biogeographic Information System; FAO statistical information on fisheries; and IMO statistical information on shipping.

[177] Additional challenges are set out in A/69/71/Add.1.

[178] An example of the multidimensional aspect of marine science to that end is found in the Global Ocean Observing System (www.ioc-goos.org/), which is considered necessary for rapid detection of changes in the ecosystems, accurate and timely predictions of natural hazards, safe and efficient maritime operations and more effective human use of the marine environment. See contribution of IOC.

105. Strengthening the science-policy interface is also essential. In that regard, the first global integrated marine assessment under the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects, which is underpinned by marine science, provides an important example of the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. It aims to respond to the need for a new form of integrated assessment that is global in scope and comprehensive in the issues it covers, and that centres on the socioeconomic causes and consequences of the degradation of the marine environment. The assessment can provide a scientific basis and rationale for policy, integrated management planning and the sustainable development of coastal and marine areas.

4. Infrastructure, including technology and technology transfer

106. Adequate infrastructure and technology are also critical in supporting sustainable development. For example, secure port facilities contribute to socioeconomic development by facilitating maritime transport and commerce. In addition, control measures within ports provide an effective tool for the enforcement of environmental, security, social and economic laws and regulations, thus supporting the sustainability of activities. Monitoring, control and surveillance to combat illegal activities, which undermine the benefits that a coastal State may gain from sustainable activities under its jurisdiction, also enhance the sustainability of related activities.[179]

107. Technological innovation and change, which also underpins infrastructure development, is pervasive in the world today, including in the ocean environment. New technologies, such as those associated with marine renewable energy (see paras. 50-52 above), are unlocking possibilities for sustainable development.[180] Technological advancement can improve existing technologies, making them more environmentally sound, more economic and able to achieve outcomes for people more efficiently and effectively. For example, with regard to marine data acquisition, one of the key drivers of the use of autonomous technology has been the increased cost of ship-borne research coupled with the growing demand for continuous, high-resolution, long-term ocean observations for both research and societal needs.[181]

108. Improvements to technologies are often cited as being directly sought-after within various areas such as shipping,[182] marine renewable energies[183] and submarine cables to assist those areas in being better able to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development.

109. Technological advancements are, however, unevenly spread within and between countries, with many developing countries locked out and the poor in other countries also being priced out.[184] This is of particular concern for developing countries, where protection of the marine environment is dependent upon the

[179] Contribution of FAO.

[180] See A/69/700.

[181] *Marine Scientific Research: A Revised Guide to the Implementation of the Relevant Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.V.12).

[182] See A/65/69/Add.2 and A/63/63 and Add.1.

[183] See A/67/79.

[184] See A/69/700.

technological and financial capacities of individual countries and technology transfer and financial resources are required.[185]

110. The Convention, inter alia, requires States to establish programmes of technical cooperation for the effective transfer of marine technology. To this end, guidelines have been developed for the transfer of marine technology.[186] Capacity-building activities to promote such transfer are being carried out.[187]

5. Capacity-building and resource mobilization

111. The effective implementation of States' obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and related agreements, as well as other commitments related to oceans, provides significant opportunities for sustainable development in all of its social, environmental and economic dimensions. It will also significantly contribute to, inter alia, poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and food security.[188] The capacity to fully participate in the elaboration and implementation of the legal regime for the oceans and seas also fosters peace and security, a necessary precondition to sustainable development. However, human, institutional and systemic capacities, as well as financing, continue to be the primary limiting factors for States in this regard, particularly with respect to least developed countries and small island developing States.

112. A previous report (A/65/69) presented an overview of the capacity-building needs of States and reviewed capacity-building activities and initiatives. It also addressed the challenges in implementing capacity-building activities and initiatives, and identified opportunities for ways to move forward. The contents of this report remain relevant today, and the magnitude of the need for capacity-building interventions is becoming increasingly clear as States continue to call for strengthened cooperation for capacity-building at all levels and across all sectors. The need for integrated approaches is clearly present in capacity requirements as States increasingly seek to harness ocean-based economies in a sustainable manner. These capacity-building requirements are particularly high for small island developing States.

113. More recently, the key importance of capacity-building was reiterated in the post-2015 development process, including through the work of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals and in the Samoa Pathway. Despite this recognition, significant lacunae remain in terms of integrated approaches to the building of capacity and even larger ones with respect to sustained funding for capacity-development in oceans.

114. In order to be effective, human, institutional and systemic capacity must be reinforced so that States, civil society and the private sector are able to address the closely interrelated problems of oceans as a whole (see A/65/69). Therefore, in

[185] See Agenda 21 (footnote 4 above).

[186] Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology adopted by the Assembly of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO at its twenty-second session, in 2003.

[187] See contributions of IOC, the International Seabed Authority and FAO; see also IMO document MEPC 65/22, annex 4, resolution MEPC.229(65), on the promotion of technical cooperation and transfer of technology relating to the improvement of energy efficiency of ships; and activities of IHO (iho.int/mtg_docs/CB/IHO_CB_Strategy_EN.pdf).

[188] General Assembly resolution 69/245; see also resolution 66/288, annex.

addition to the necessary sectoral capacity-building programmes,[189] capacity-building initiatives across sectors, disciplines and geographic scales must be fostered. For example, integrated human capacity-building interventions are essential in support of sustainable development. With a view to providing integrated human resource development, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat manages two fellowships: the United Nations-Nippon Foundation of Japan Fellowship Programme and the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea. The case studies kindly provided by some alumni for the benefit of this report, and referred to herein, demonstrate how individual capacity-building is an essential element in enhancing the sustainable development of oceans and their resources at national/regional levels.[190]

115. The science-policy interface must also be woven into initiatives so as to not only enable an understanding of the possibilities afforded by oceans, but also to ensure informed decisions and the proper monitoring of the resultant actions (see paras. 129-132). Capacity-building must also be accompanied by significant resource mobilization and sustained funding. In this regard, it is important to note that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea lacks a funding mechanism, and the Secretariat's support to States in the implementation of the Convention and related agreements is largely dependent on voluntary trust funds with narrow mandates and modest capacity-building projects addressing specific issues. The recent focus by many States on harnessing their sustainable ocean economies could provide an opportunity to unlock potential for public-private partnerships (see paras. 125-127 below), including for funding of the necessary capacity-building initiatives. Furthermore, potential synergies across disciplines and sectors may provide opportunities for economies of scale and drive the necessary integration of all three aspects of sustainable development.[191]

116. Harnessing the oceans to pursue sustainable development in an integrated manner across its three dimensions must be accompanied by the operationalization of the reality that "capacity is development".[192]

6. Cooperation and coordination

117. The General Assembly has consistently recognized the need to improve cooperation and coordination at the national, regional and global levels, in accordance with the Convention, to support and supplement, inter alia, the efforts of each State in promoting the sustainable development of the oceans and seas (see, for example, resolutions 69/245 and 66/288, annex).

118. International cooperation and coordination, in its many different forms, can contribute to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in

[189] See contributions of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, FAO, ECA, WMO, IHO, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNODC.

[190] The full text of the case studies submitted is available at www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[191] For example, climate change financing could be directed at capacity-building initiatives within the various ocean sectors that also support climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives (see para. 70 above).

[192] UNDP, "Capacity is development", report of a global event on the theme "Smart strategies and capable institutions for 2015 and beyond", held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 17 to 19 March 2010 (2010).

ocean affairs and the law of the sea, as well as sharing of experiences, best practices, resources and knowledge.

119. At the global level, since the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the General Assembly has undertaken an annual review of developments relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea, as the global institution having the competence to undertake such a review. In particular, the Informal Consultative Process was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/33 to facilitate its annual review of developments in ocean affairs and the law of the sea, with an emphasis on identifying areas where coordination and cooperation at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels should be enhanced. The Assembly has recognized the role of the Informal Consultative Process as a unique forum for comprehensive discussions on issues related to oceans and the law of the sea, consistent with the framework provided by the Convention and chapter 17 of Agenda 21,[4] and that the perspective of the three pillars of sustainable development should be further enhanced in the examination of the selected topics (see resolution 69/245).

120. From Agenda 21 to "The future we want", Member States have continuously highlighted the crucial need for greater coherence and coordination among the various initiatives and funding mechanisms related to sustainable development. As regards inter-agency cooperation, UN-Oceans was established as the inter-agency mechanism that seeks to enhance the coordination, coherence and effectiveness of activities related to oceans and coastal areas of competent organizations of the United Nations system. It comprises 22 members, including the International Seabed Authority. It operates under the overall supervision of the General Assembly and in accordance with the Convention, the respective competences of each of its participating organizations and the mandates and priorities approved by their respective governing bodies. Currently, UN-Oceans is developing an inventory of mandates and specific activities of its members, which will be available on the UN-Oceans website, with a view to identifying possible areas for collaboration and synergy.

121. Modalities of cooperation and coordination among States have evolved to address emerging challenges. Member States have recognized that new aid providers and novel partnership approaches have contributed to increasing the flow of resources, and that the interplay of development assistance with private investment, trade and new development actors provides opportunities for aid to leverage private resources.[193]

122. In terms of the source of the assistance, whether financial or technical, Member States have recognized that North-South cooperation remains the core type of international cooperation and that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for it, but rather a complement.[194] In this regard, the donor community, including through international financial institutions, remains a key player in providing assistance for sustainable development by ensuring steady and predictable access to adequate financing.

[193] See General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

[194] Ibid; see also General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex.

123. An example of inter-State cooperation, with the financial and technical assistance of the donor community, is the UNDP-Global Environment Facility Sustainable Ocean Management Programme.[195]

124. South-South and triangular cooperation, which provide effective approaches for mobilizing human and financial resources, expertise, technology and knowledge, remain important.[196]

125. In the context of the post-2015 development agenda, the Secretary-General has also noted that inclusive partnerships must be a key feature of implementation at all levels.[197]

126. The special needs of small island developing States and the increasingly important role of the private sector in achieving sustainable development have been recognized in the Samoa Pathway. In order to address that challenge, Pacific small island developing States are working towards a multi-stakeholder partnership entitled the Pacific Ocean Alliance. Among its goals, the Alliance aims to foster informed and balanced decision-making at all levels, which takes account of the economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits of the Pacific Ocean and islands, their coasts and coastal areas and associated resources.[198]

127. Partnerships of all types provide a mechanism for engagement of different actors and stakeholder in achieving sustainable development. Public-private sector partnerships represent important opportunities for the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.[199]

128. Many existing initiatives have not necessarily included an integrated approach since the beginning of their work, but rather developed it through adjusting mandates or methods. For example, the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities includes multi-stakeholder partnerships in nutrients, wastewater management and marine litter which consider the economic and social issues in addition to the environmental aspects.[200] Similarly, ongoing work on chemicals and waste management has included cross-sectoral cooperation and outreach activities targeting stakeholders outside of chemicals and waste on various interlinkages between chemicals and wastes and thematic areas.[201]

[195] Contribution of UNDP.

[196] For example, the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security is a multilateral partnership of six countries, which integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development.

[197] See A/69/700.

[198] See www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/embeds/file/poa-flyer-web.pdf.

[199] See Private Sector Partnerships Forum, convened on 30 and 31 August 2014 in the context of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Apia from 1 to 4 September 2014 (http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2014/08/Co-Chairs-Summary_Private-Sector-Partnerships-Forum.pdf); see also Senia Febrica, "Public-private partnership for the safety of navigation and pollution prevention in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore", alumni contribution, available from www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unnff_programme_home/unnff_program_sg_report.htm.

[200] Contribution of UNEP.

[201] Contribution of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

7. Systems for measuring progress in the integration of environmental, economic and social dimensions

129. Several summits and conferences on sustainable development have recognized the importance of indicators in assisting informed decision-making and spearheaded the development of suitable indicators.[202]

130. In the context of the post-2015 development agenda, the Statistical Commission has started the process of developing a draft set of indicative global indicators to accompany the sustainable development goals and targets, with the view of adopting the indicator framework in March 2016.[203] While taking different approaches, various civil society groups have set out to develop global monitoring indicators for sustainable development goals.[204] It is generally observed that indicators should be limited in number, simple, intuitive, and policy-relevant, as well as relevant to all countries and people; lend themselves to fine levels of disaggregation; be complemented by national indicators; track cross-cutting issues; and support integrated, systems-based approaches to implementation.

131. Various mechanisms exist in the context of ocean affairs for data gathering and monitoring. Some mechanisms aim at monitoring progress in implementing internationally agreed commitments. However, to date, such efforts remain sector-based. For example, IMO developed its voluntary Member State Audit Scheme, which will become mandatory from 1 January 2016. The Scheme aims to determine the extent to which IMO member States give full and complete effect to their obligations and responsibilities contained in a number of IMO treaty instruments.[205] The FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance address issues such as performance assessment criteria and a procedure for carrying out an assessment. They are expected to provide a valuable tool for strengthening compliance by flag States with their international duties and obligations regarding the flagging and

[202] See, for example, Agenda 21(footnote 4 above); *Indicators of Sustainable Development: Guidelines and Methodologies*, 3rd ed. (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.II.A.2); A/56/326 and resolution 56/95; and United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, "Statistics and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda" (July 2013), available from www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/UNTT_MonitoringReport_WEB.pdf.

[203] Technical report by the Bureau of the Statistical Commission on the process of the development of an indicator framework for the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda, working (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6754Technical%20report%20of%20the%20UNSC%20Bureau%20 (final).pdf.

[204] See, for example, "Indicators and a monitoring framework for the sustainable development goals: launching a data revolution for the SDGs", report by the Leadership Council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, revised working draft (version 6) (18 February 2015), available from http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/150218-SDSN-Indicator-Report-FEB-FINAL.pdf; Global Ocean Commission, "Proposed elements of indicators for SDG goal 14 — oceans, seas and marine resources" (February 2015), available from www.globaloceancommission.org/wp-content/uploads/GOC_Post2015_Ocean-indicators_final.pdf; International Council for Science and International Social Science Council, *Review of Targets for the Sustainable Development Goals: The Science Perspective* (Paris, International Council for Science, 2015), available from www.icsu.org/publications/reports-and-reviews/review-of-targets-for-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-science-perspective-2015/SDG-Report.pdf

[205] See www.imo.org/OurWork/MSAS/Pages/default.aspx.

control of fishing vessels.[206] In addition, several regional fisheries management organizations have undergone performance reviews.

132. Some mechanisms aim at monitoring the state of the marine environment in a cross-sectoral manner. In addition to the first global integrated marine assessment (see para. 105 above), other mechanisms include the UNEP Global Environment Outlook process, reporting on national plans of action to implement the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, the Global Ocean Observing System, the Ocean Biogeographic Information System, the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network, the Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme, *Global Biodiversity Outlook* and the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership. At the regional level, regional seas conventions and action plans have produced assessments of the state of the marine environment.[207]

IV. Conclusions

133. The role of oceans and ocean activities in achieving sustainable development is well-established, as outlined throughout this report. Not only do oceans contribute directly to the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development, they also contribute to other areas recognized as important for sustainable development. In particular, they can make a positive contribution to poverty alleviation, food security and nutrition, health, gender equality and empowerment of women, energy availability and sustainability, combatting climate change and its impacts, infrastructure development and innovation. As a result, they can also contribute to sustainable consumption and production patterns, sustained economic growth and employment, reducing inequalities within and among countries and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. In that regard, as emphasized by the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (see A/67/890), it is important that oceans and seas not be forgotten in the post-2015 development agenda.

134. Investing in the health, resilience and productivity of our oceans and the sustainability of the activities taking place in, or impacting, the oceans is essential, as this can have a multiplier effect through direct and indirect contribution to other priorities for sustainable development. As highlighted in the synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda (A/69/700), a transformational approach and mobilizing the necessary means of implementation are essential to achieving balanced integration that promotes sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection and thereby benefits all. Besides the necessary financing, developing an appropriate enabling framework is critical for enhanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. This includes developing a supporting policy framework; implementing the legal measures that facilitate integrated approaches; establishing the supporting institutional mechanisms for cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination; promoting technology development and transfer, as well as science to

[206] FAO document COFI/2014/4.2/Rev.1, appendix H.

[207] Contributions of the Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and the secretariat of the Helsinki Commission; see also contribution of the European Union.

support sound-decision making; developing suitable indicators to measure progress in integration; and investing in capacity-building, including with a view to adapting to vulnerabilities to various global risks.

135. It is important to highlight the contribution that effective implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the basis for addressing the closely interrelated problems of ocean space as a whole, can make to integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. The Convention sets out a legal order for the seas and oceans that facilitates international communication and promotes the peaceful uses of the seas and oceans, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources, the conservation of their living resources and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment. In doing so, it aims, inter alia, to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples of the world. It also takes into account the interests and needs of mankind as a whole and, in particular, the special interests and needs of developing countries, whether coastal or landlocked. In that regard, stepping up efforts to develop the capacity to effectively implement the Convention, its implementing agreements and other relevant instruments will be an essential building block of successful integration.

136. Owing to the paucity of available information, assessing the status of integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in relation to oceans and seas is challenging. While examples of good practices exist, they are often sparse and thus do not allow for a comprehensive assessment. Nonetheless, as indicated in the present report, there are a number of persistent challenges facing our oceans and the people whose livelihood depends on them, which highlight the importance of enhancing efforts to achieve effective and balanced integration of the environmental, economic and social dimensions.

137. There are different approaches, visions, models and tools that can be adopted in pursuit of integration. It is clear, however, that sustainable development is a shared responsibility. The enabling measures, of which the aforementioned are only examples, need to be further developed by each State on the basis of its national priorities and circumstances. In addition, improved integration of the three dimensions in relation to oceans and seas should be a constant and determining factor in regional and global decision-making as well as in cooperation and coordination efforts.

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Mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the United Nations system was requested to mainstream the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development throughout its work. The two progress reports submitted since then indicated that such efforts would result in better support to Member States in their pursuit of sustainable development. The reports also highlighted that mainstreaming the three dimensions ultimately consisted of harnessing synergies and created opportunities that advanced sustainable development through the policies and programmes of the United Nations, as well as averted unintended or conflicting impacts, priorities and outcomes. The present report highlights the role of the sustainable development goals at the core of the post-2015 development agenda and their potential to inject new impetus for embracing integrated approaches to development and to marshal a range of existing policy tools and guidance for collaboration. The report examines accelerated efforts within the inter-agency work of the United Nations system to prepare for the new universal development agenda, building on collective efforts that successfully leveraged acceleration towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The sustainable development goals can also prepare the United Nations for

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enhanced support at the country level, including through concerted efforts to adapt strategic plans and frameworks, core instruments that drive sustainable development approaches in its work and thinking. The report highlights future reviews of the United Nations system, including through closer bonds with existing evaluation functions, as a critical component of assessing progress against the post-2015 development agenda. Lastly, the report presents conclusions and provides a set of recommendations.

I. Introduction

1. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, Heads of State and Government renewed global commitment to sustainable development and outlined a broad vision that identifies poverty eradication as the greatest challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for achieving sustainable development.

2. Heads of State and Government agreed that, in order to accomplish that vision, sustainable development should be mainstreamed at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their interlinkages.

3. In the outcome document of the Conference, entitled "The future we want" (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), Heads of State and Government called for the further mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the work of the United Nations system, thereby asking the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to approach their own work from a sustainable development perspective. Member States reiterated that call in 2013 and 2014 and invited the Secretary-General to continue to report to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on progress made, including for the consideration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The present report was prepared pursuant to that request.

4. The efforts of the United Nations system to mainstream economic, social and environmental dimensions are particularly relevant at a time when the international community is elaborating a post-2015 development agenda with the sustainable development goals at its core. The United Nations must be ready to help Member States to implement and review that agenda, which will be transformative, integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions and apply to all countries.

5. The sustainable development goals proposed by the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals provide significant opportunities for change. Because of the way in which they are designed, they can accelerate the integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions in the policies and actions of all development actors, including the United Nations system. That was the intention of world leaders at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, when they stated that the sustainable development goals contributed to the achievement of sustainable development and served as a driver for implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable development in the United Nations system as a whole.

6. The sustainable development goals framework can thus bolster efforts already under way within the United Nations system to effectively support a balanced and integrated implementation of the goals. Such initiatives are ongoing at the international, regional and country levels across and within organizations but can be scaled up with intergovernmental guidance and support.

7. The present report builds on the two previous reports of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming the three dimensions of sustainable development (A/69/79-E/2014/66 and A/68/79-E/2013/69).

II. Sustainable development goals as a driving force for integrating economic, social and environmental dimensions

8. In 2014, following roughly 18 months of intergovernmental consultations, the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals proposed a set of sustainable development goals. The goals would incorporate the Millennium Development Goals and become the reference objectives for the international community for the period 2015-2030. In its resolution 68/309, the Assembly decided that the Working Group's proposal "shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered".

9. The proposed goals constitute an ambitious agenda covering a much broader range of issues than the Millennium Development Goals. They aim to be applicable to all countries, not only to developing countries, and to serve as guideposts for a transition to sustainable development.

10. What makes the agenda transformative is also its foundation in a people-centred, rights-based approach to development, pursuing aspirations to eradicate poverty irreversibly, tackle discrimination and inequality and ensure that "no one is left behind". This universal agenda integrates dimensions related to peaceful societies underpinned by effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. It requires a paradigm shift in development thinking. The ambition to leave no one behind will require better identification of vulnerable groups and understanding of the risks that those groups are facing. Implementing the agenda will require building linkages between development and other areas, such as humanitarian action. Actions must be underpinned by human rights and the rule of law and engage all development actors. They will need to recognize the relationship between economic, social and environmental dimensions.

11. Lack of integration across sectors in terms of strategies, policies and implementation has long been perceived as a major obstacle to achieving sustainable development. Insufficient understanding of and accounting for trade-offs, interlinkages, synergies and benefits across sectors have at times resulted in incoherent policies, adverse impacts of some sector-specific development policies and, ultimately, diverging outcomes and trends across broad objectives for sustainable development.

12. An internationally agreed framework of goals and targets has great value for the international community and the United Nations system. As a tool for monitoring and reviewing sustainable development progress, the goals and targets are a common benchmark against which progress can be assessed, as well as the basis for cooperation and mutual review. For development institutions, the sustainable development goals can be expected to provide a framework based on which policy and action will be recentred on achieving human well-being and reducing inequality. They should inspire and help to shape strategies, policies and actions by Governments in rich and poor countries, as well as by the range of development actors. The Millennium Development Goals produced a similar normative effect in international development cooperation institutions.

13. The structure of the set of sustainable development goals, as put forward by the Open Working Group, has implications for policy integration and coherence across areas. The sustainable development goals and targets refer to multiple goals

and sectors. of the 107 targets in the proposal of the Open Working Group that are not related to means of implementation, more than half are explicitly cross-cutting, which means that they refer to at least one other goal. Many targets even link three or more different goals. This may facilitate integration and policy coherence across sectors, in particular for the United Nations system. Such links among goals through the targets may also facilitate real mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development, particularly around such themes as sustainable consumption and production.

14. In designing and monitoring their work on the sustainable development goals, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes concerned with a specific goal (e.g. education, health, economic growth) will therefore need to take into account targets that refer to other goals. Given the broad ownership of the goals, this may provide a stronger incentive than in the past for cross-sector, integrated and collaborative work. Similarly, to evaluate progress under the sustainable development goals, it will be necessary to look at multiple goals concurrently and in an integrated fashion.

15. For example, health is covered by goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages), which includes 13 targets (4 of which relate to means of implementation). Eight targets under goals 2, 6, 11 and 12 also explicitly refer to health in their wording. Those targets can be referred to as "extended" targets for goal 3, as opposed to the "core" targets listed under that goal. Arguably, institutions concerned with the health sector and operating within the framework of the sustainable development goals will have to consider both core and extended targets when designing, implementing and monitoring policies.

16. Another feature of the sustainable development goals that may enable cross-sector dialogue and greater policy coherence can be found in the broad formulation of goal 2, which adds to traditional targets on hunger explicit references to land management, agricultural production methods and ecosystems. Such connections may encourage development actors to make closer links between agriculture, nutrition, food security and ecosystems much more than in the past.

17. The proposed sustainable development goals include two stand-alone goals: on inequality (goal 10) and on sustainable consumption and production (goal 12). The inclusion of those two cross-cutting dimensions, which are at the very heart of sustainable development, in the set of sustainable development goals confers them with high visibility. The formulation of targets under goals 10 and 12 link the two to many of the other goals, virtually ensuring that those two concepts emerge as the most heavily interlinked themes in the sustainable development agenda.

18. With regard to goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns), links with goal 6 (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all) are provided under target 6.3, on water quality, and target 6.4, on water-use efficiency and freshwater. Importantly, sustainable consumption and production is linked with goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) through target 8.4, on improving global resource efficiency in consumption and production.

19. With regard to the issue of inequality in goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries), many relevant targets are listed under other goals. Of particular note is the strong link with inequality in goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive

societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) and goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere). Most of the links between goals 10 and 1 are provided through targets on universal access to energy, water, health, housing and green space and equal access to resources, which are concurrently listed under other goals.

20. Inequality and sustainable consumption and production have often suffered from not having strong sectoral anchoring in international development institutions. For instance, sustainable consumption and production has suffered from weak integration with other areas of work, and resource efficiency considerations in various sectors were often lost in development strategies and policies. Operationalizing the sustainable development goals will require actors from many different sectors to address sustainable consumption and production targets under their goals, which may ultimately enable greater integration of sustainable consumption and production across the board.

21. Notwithstanding the enabling features built into the sustainable development goals, integrating the various dimensions of sustainable development into strategies and policy advice across the United Nations system will not happen automatically. Integration of thinking and policy advice, including capacity-building, represents a challenge to "business as usual". At times, the fragmented funding structure hinders collaboration. Joining efforts and cooperation towards achieving common goals are necessary to ensure policy integration. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system provided important recommendations in that regard. Several initiatives to spur greater collaboration and integrated thinking throughout the United Nations system are ongoing.

III. Readying the United Nations system to support the post-2015 development agenda

22. The first report of the Secretary-General (A/68/79-E/2013/69) identified important building blocks for mainstreaming the three dimensions of sustainable development in the work of the United Nations system. Those include commitment at the highest level bolstered by intergovernmental guidance, and stronger coordination and policy coherence. Also critical are adequate institutional support, analytical capacity-building and mobilization and allocation of resources to drive sustainable development.

23. Strong mandates pertaining to the mainstreaming of sustainable development already exist. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the United Nations system was called upon to mainstream the three dimensions of sustainable development in its work. This was echoed in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, which similarly recognized the role and comparative advantage of the United Nations system in advancing the integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. In its most recent resolution on the subject, the Assembly encouraged the United Nations system to promote sustainable development outcomes through strengthening normative and operational linkages. At the summit on the post-2015 development agenda, to be held

in September 2015, it is expected that the United Nations system will be called upon to support the implementation of the agenda.

24. The United Nations institutional architecture for promoting and reviewing sustainable development is in place and was reformed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. At the Conference, the overarching role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in integration and in coordinated follow-up to all major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields was reaffirmed. The integration segment of the Economic and Social Council is becoming a platform in which to discuss options for coordinated and integrated policies.

25. Also at that Conference, the high-level political forum on sustainable development was created as an important platform for leadership, guidance, recommendations and review of sustainable development commitments, including the sustainable development goals. It was confirmed, as was done at the most recent quadrennial comprehensive policy review, that the regional commissions had an important role to play in prioritizing sustainable development initiatives through their normative and operational support work, as well as in facilitating regional reflection and policymaking through annual regional forums on sustainable development.

26. The various intergovernmental platforms, along with the vast number of United Nations system intergovernmental bodies, have contributed to elaborating the post-2015 development agenda. They will now provide guidance on how to address some of the major implications of the new agenda for the United Nations system. The Economic and Social Council dialogue on the long-term positioning of the United Nations system in the context of the post-2015 development agenda will provide important directions. Coherent intergovernmental guidance can encourage initiatives launched by the United Nations system to prepare for supporting the implementation of the agenda.

A. Making the United Nations system fit for transformation

27. In his synthesis report on the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet" (A/69/700), the Secretary-General noted that a United Nations system that was "fit for purpose" to deliver on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda was one that must provide specialized advice when requested and be equally adept at ensuring an integrated approach and committed to working more collaboratively to leverage the expertise and capacities of all its organizations in support of sustainable development.

28. The Economic and Social Council holds dialogues and events involving Member States and all relevant stakeholders, which represent a very important opportunity to reposition the United Nations development system to play a critical role and maximize its comparative advantages in support of sustainable development. The main message of the dialogue held in February 2015 underlined how the United Nations development system needed to respond coherently in linking the normative, standard-setting and operational dimensions of United Nations work, which would require new thinking and new approaches to work models and financing to guarantee operational effectiveness.

29. Work has already been undertaken in the context of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). The Board has been reflecting on how the United Nations system should transform itself to best support Member States in delivering on an integrated and universal agenda. It has focused its reflections on five interconnected elements of sustainable development: universality, equality, human rights, integration and data.

30. The Board also examined the capacity and readiness of the United Nations system to help to deliver the new sustainable development agenda and become more effective and efficient in supporting the achievement of development results. At the core of its deliberations was an understanding that the emerging agenda required a whole-of-system approach. It has reflected on how to better coordinate action on programmatic, operational and management issues across the system. Leveraging institutional synergies and complementarities would facilitate a coherent integration of policies across the three dimensions of sustainable development and contribute to the effective implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

31. The CEB exercise is already leading to concrete actions. The High-level Committee on Programmes is now looking more specifically at sustainable urbanization, climate change and youth employment in order to identify measures to deepen policy coherence, system-wide coordination and engagement with other stakeholders with a view to better supporting Member States in those areas.

32. The United Nations Development Group, through a newly created working group on sustainable development, is reflecting on possible new approaches for rallying system entities around programme countries towards the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. Such approaches would entail: (a) mainstreaming, that is, helping countries to integrate the post-2015 development agenda in their national, regional and local plans for development; (b) acceleration, by helping to target resources in priority areas for achieving the post-2015 development agenda; and (c) policy support, by making sure that the skills and expertise available in the system are made available to countries in a timely and cost-effective manner. The strategy would entail efforts to raise awareness of the agenda, support countries' analysis of their own policies and bolster their capacity to review progress. Member States will be kept informed of progress in implementing initiatives in future reports and reporting in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

B. Context for pursuing environmental and social sustainability

33. In his 2013 and 2014 reports, the Secretary-General noted the framework for advancing environmental and social sustainability in the United Nations system as a further entry point for integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development in the work of the United Nations system. The framework was endorsed in September 2012 by the Environment Management Group, the United Nations inter-agency coordination body on environmental issues. It provides a basic architecture for integrating environmental and social sustainability measures into the United Nations system at three levels: (a) internal strategies and policies; (b) operational activities, by means of programmes and projects; and (c) administrative decisions, such as on facilities management.

34. Two and a half years after its endorsement, the framework is being applied throughout various parts of the system, although implementation is not yet widespread. Further efforts are needed to promote its full implementation.

35. It was for that purpose that the Environment Management Group developed an interim guide to raise awareness of measures that could be adopted by individual organizations, clarify financial and institutional implications and help entities across the United Nations system to learn from each other's experiences in advancing environmental and social sustainability.

36. The Environment Management Group also initiated a pilot project to assist five agencies, representing a variety of mandates, cultures and operational models, in their efforts to implement environmental and social sustainability measures internally. The pilot project will be carried out in 2015.

37. As an outcome of the pilot project, it will be important to consider how to adjust the framework and the interim guide in order to clarify how economic dimensions need to be incorporated, both to ensure due diligence and outcome effectiveness of United Nations operations and programming and to maximize synergies of actions with strategies for inclusive and sustainable growth.

C. Adapting support to intergovernmental work

38. A range of inter-agency bodies have supported the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. Various ad hoc and time-bound mechanisms were created for that purpose, notably the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda and its inter-agency technical support team.

39. The technical support team has worked in a novel way to support the Open Working Group throughout its deliberations. Its 55 member entities organized around several lead agencies to prepare issues briefs on the various topics examined by the Open Working Group. This allowed interdisciplinary dialogue within thematically driven coalitions while responding quickly to Member State requests. The technical support team stands ready to assist Member States on an as-needed basis.

40. This lead-agency model may inspire arrangements for United Nations system support to other intergovernmental bodies, notably the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

41. The elaboration of the sustainable development goals has also broadened the work of some existing inter-agency mechanisms. For example, UN-Water has been continuously addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development in its work, albeit in a fairly sectoral manner through its thematic priority areas and task forces. With the advent of the sustainable development goals process, UN-Water has put in place an institutional mechanism to address economic, social and environmental dimensions in a holistic manner, focusing on the entire water cycle. This enabled the provision of technical advice to Member States on the proposed water goal and related targets. UN-Water has also launched an expanded monitoring initiative aimed at helping Member States to review all the proposed water targets.

42. The focus on sustainable development requires enhancing support to intergovernmental bodies. Reports and advice must be based on a keen

understanding of the dynamics between the various dimensions and sectors. They must be grounded in scientific analysis and informed by the expertise and joint reflection of United Nations system organizations. Secretariats must work together to ensure that each governing body is informed of the work being done in other forums and contributes in its area of expertise and mandate.

D. More integrated policy advice

43. Policy advice is another area in which the United Nations system needs to bolster its ability to provide analysis and recommendations to support integrated action across the economic, social and environmental areas, across sectors and between development and other areas, such as humanitarian assistance.

44. For example, the Global Migration Group, which brings together 18 organizations of, or connected to, the United Nations system, promotes better coordination in the application of all relevant international instruments and norms relating to migration. Its work covers a wide range of topics, including labour migration, migration data, migration and health, migration and climate change, and migration and human rights. Apart from sustaining policy cooperation and integration in the field of international migration, the Group also contributes to the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

45. Another example is the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, which comprises five United Nations system entities and plans to provide a comprehensive suite of green economy services at the national level in support of the adoption of transformative economic policies to meet the demands and challenges of the twenty-first century. The Partnership aims to support 30 countries over the next seven years in building national green economy strategies that will generate new jobs and skills, promote clean technologies and reduce environmental risks and poverty.

46. Importantly, efforts to advance collaboration and support integrated approaches must be accelerated at the country level, where there will likely be a demand for support from the United Nations system.

IV. Adapting country-level support as an urgent imperative

47. Some countries have already started reflecting on the implications of the post-2015 agenda on their national development plans and strategies. The United Nations system is being called upon to support such an exercise in some of its programme countries.

48. Following the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, there will be a strong expectation that the United Nations will adjust its policy advice and technical assistance to help countries to gear national development efforts towards the new goals and targets. This in turn will inform the strategic content of the next generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks "Delivering as one" programmes, and broader United Nations engagement at all levels. A survey of programme countries conducted for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities[1] showed that the efforts of the United Nations system were seen

[1] Survey questions are available from www.un.org/en/ecosoc/qcpr/pdf/qcpr_programme-

as currently focused on achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Countries will likewise expect the sustainable development goals to guide the United Nations system.

49. The survey reveals that Governments continue to consider the United Nations development system as a relevant partner across the various areas of the future sustainable development goals. Sustainable development is seen as one of the areas in which United Nations assistance to countries has been most significant and effective (after gender, health, environment and governance). Sustainable development also features among the areas that Governments consider most important for United Nations support in the coming four years (after economic growth and employment and the environment). This reinforces the mandate to mainstream sustainable development approaches in the United Nations system.

50. The survey shows that Governments would like the United Nations to make greater efforts to support national capacities and use national institutions. This would be consistent with the focus of the sustainable development goals on institutional effectiveness and accountability, especially as articulated under goal 16.

51. At the country level, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework is used in most countries as the strategic planning tool for Governments and the United Nations system to come together and plan the joint support provided to United Nations country teams. The Framework is likewise an important tool for collectively mainstreaming sustainable development approaches and preparing the United Nations system for helping countries to implement the new development agenda.

52. A preliminary analysis of the current generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (those initiated in 2013-2014) showed that, taken together, they addressed the "unfinished business" of the Millennium Development Goals and began to shift focus to the proposed sustainable development goals, albeit with some variations. This analysis points to the need for a more robust scoping and understanding of United Nations capacity to deliver a universal and integrated sustainable development agenda in various country contexts.

53. Overall, implementing the recommendations from the quadrennial comprehensive policy review will be critical, as improved coordination will also allow drawing from the expertise and resources of various organizations. Collaboration should also include entities engaged in economic development and humanitarian affairs.

54. Providing integrated support to the achievement of sustainable development goals will require other adjustments in the focus and working methods of the United Nations system. The survey conducted for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review showed that a significant number of countries considered that some United Nations organizations could be more effective in supporting countries in addressing problems of inequality and social exclusion. Nonetheless, low-income countries considered the United Nations to be highly relevant to their development needs. These findings should be carefully examined.

country_survey-2014.pdf.

55. Coherence initiatives, such as the "Delivering as one" initiative, now implemented in 44 countries, seem to have improved the performance of the United Nations system in this regard. The "Delivering as one" initiative has also helped to mainstream such cross-cutting issues as the environment, the decent work agenda and human rights. The initiative may thus presumably help to advance more integrated policies and, ultimately, sustainable development approaches. It should be consolidated, notably through the implementation of standard operating procedures, in order to effectively translate integrated programming into joint operational delivery across the agencies, funds and programmes.

56. These various efforts will be bolstered by the work of the new working group on sustainable development of the United Nations Development Group. An important issue that will need to be addressed relates to the role of the United Nations in advocating and advising on the implementation of the sustainable development goals in developed countries.

57. Member States will need to encourage and guide these efforts through the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, on the basis of reflection during dialogues of the Economic and Social Council on the long-term positioning of the United Nations system and solid reporting on United Nations performance in mainstreaming sustainable development approaches.

V. Strategic plans and frameworks to drive integration

58. Ultimately, sustainable development should be the guiding framework for United Nations system organizations. The first two reports of the Secretary-General emphasized that, for that to happen, sustainable development must be embedded in organizations' strategic plans and frameworks. It was also acknowledged that not all organizations required major adjustments, since several mandates had already called upon the United Nations system to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner, notably in the wake of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Still, in making the transition to a transformative post-2015 development agenda, sustained efforts will be needed to ensure that all strategic plans are aligned with the sustainable development goals, including strategic objectives and results and indicators for reviewing progress. The target indicators being developed in the sustainable development goals framework will help to update the indicators used by various organizations in reviewing progress and implementing their strategic plans.

59. Reviewing and adjusting strategic plans entails practical and technical challenges. Some organizations have just completed the elaboration of their strategic plans or their midterm review of implementation. In some cases, this has entailed adjusting plans to reflect other mandates given to the organization. Governing bodies and organizations might be experiencing planning fatigue. The need to assess the implications of the post-2015 development agenda should be made clear; this will require coordination on the part of Member States and the United Nations system.

60. However, there are examples of organizations reviewing the implications of the proposed sustainable development goals. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, for example, has initiated an internal stocktaking and visioning exercise to ensure that it plans for long-term results and adapts to the framework of

the post-2015 development agenda. It should be noted that the longer time horizon of the sustainable development goals is not easily reconciled with the strategic planning cycle, which is often too short to fully realize gains in the implementation of sustainable development activities. The United Nations Children's Fund is also in the process of reviewing its strategic plan, in preparation for the midterm review in the following year, to assess whether it is coherent, makes the needed linkages between various areas, is measurable and links to the work of other organizations. Upcoming planning and midterm reviews should be fully used to gear strategic plans towards sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda. There may also be a need to conduct ad hoc reviews to determine whether adjustments to strategic frameworks and budgets, among others, are needed.

Box 1

Adapting United Nations system strategic plans to sustainable development and the sustainable development goals

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) recently reviewed each of the seven subprogrammes of its 2014-2019 strategic plan to examine their alignment with goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), as well as other goals interlinked through relevant targets. To that end, UN-Habitat is prepared to deliver technical assistance on issues of security of tenure and slum prevention, non-motorized transport, land-use efficiency and other outcomes of urban planning, multipurpose public space and urban finance to address the 10 targets proposed under goal 11. The results of that review have already been integrated in the proposed work programme and budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

The strategic plan of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for 2014-2017 recognizes the need for greater links between environmental sustainability, poverty eradication, inclusive growth, governance, resilience and gender equality. Since 2013, UNDP has taken steps to operationalize the strategic plan and better mainstream the three dimensions of sustainable development across its policy, programming, and partnership opportunities, including through the promotion of South-South and triangular cooperation. Strategic planning objectives are now being tracked through a global integrated results and resources framework with targets and indicators that include sustainable development results definitions. UNDP is also creating a corporate planning system that focuses on the needs of country offices and offers a single, unified and user-friendly platform for planning, monitoring and reporting sustainable development policy and programming across all levels of the organization. Its own quadrennial comprehensive policy review implementation plan, which is updated and reported on a quarterly basis, supports this process at all levels.

UNDP has completed a complementary reorganization of its bureaux, offices and staffing, in part to ensure mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development and break down work silos across development themes. In 2015, new social and environmental standards were launched and will become an indicator in the integrated results and resources framework.

In 2013, States members of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) renewed its mandate to promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development with a view to more explicitly pursuing integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in UNIDO activities.

The mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development, both in the renewed mandate of UNIDO and across the United Nations system as a whole, have been underpinned by a burgeoning results- and impact-based orientation at the policy, operational and management level.

On that basis, UNIDO established a new integrated results and performance framework as the basis for long-term results-based management, monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems. Aligned with the global sustainable development agenda, as well as with the overarching corporate goals of transparency, effectiveness and efficiency, the framework is being introduced into the UNIDO programme and budgets document, as well as the new medium-term programme framework for 2016-2019.

Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development has become more prominent in the work of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) since the holding of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. In 2012, the ITU Council, in its resolution 1353, recognized the new global commitment to sustainable development and, in particular, the need for further mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development. In 2014, the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference approved a new strategic plan for the period 2016-2019, which sets out the vision, goals and targets that ITU member States have committed to achieving by 2020 in collaboration with all stakeholders across the information and communications technology (ICT) ecosystem.

Known as the "Connect 2020 agenda", the new set of goals provides ITU membership with a unique framework for action to advance growth, inclusion, sustainability and innovation in the ICT sector and to adopt a unified results-based framework that brings together ITU-led activities under a single set of measurable goals and targets.

Through the new framework, member States have put sustainable development at the centre of the ITU strategy.

61. As discussed previously, with the sustainable development goals comes the need for closer linkages between sectors and organizations and more coordinated and integrated planning. There are several options to consider for strengthening coordination and integrated plans across United Nations entities using established inter-agency mechanisms and in line with existing mandates. Those should be explored.

62. The United Nations system has gained experience in mainstreaming cross-cutting issues, such as gender, into strategic plans. That experience can be built upon to ensure appropriate interlinkages between the work of organizations.

63. In addition to strategic planning, evidence-based evaluations can accelerate and guide the efforts of the United Nations system to mainstream sustainable development and the sustainable development goals in its work.

VI. Reviewing and evaluating the impact of the United Nations system on sustainable development

A. Facilitating system accountability

64. Within the context of the intergovernmental process to elaborate a post-2015 development agenda, Member States are shaping a framework for monitoring and reviewing progress in implementation. Thus far, the focus has been on how to review country progress in implementing the agenda. However, it is also widely recognized that the United Nations system and other development actors are also accountable for how they support the implementation of the sustainable development goals and the broader agenda.

65. A number of intergovernmental mechanisms ensure the accountability of the United Nations system. The General Assembly provides high-level guidance on operational activities for development through the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, and the Economic and Social Council keeps United Nations system implementation thereof under review. In addition, individual organizations are accountable to their respective governing bodies.

66. In 2013, the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/290, decided that the high-level political forum on sustainable development would review progress in implementing sustainable development commitments and that its reviews "shall include developed and developing countries, as well as relevant United Nations entities". That line of reporting should not duplicate the existing accountability lines. The future annual report on mainstreaming sustainable development in the work of the United Nations system could be used as a basis for such reviews, depending on Member States' guidance.

67. More generally, the sustainable development goals, targets and indicators will provide a yardstick against which to evaluate development progress. It will be important to determine how they can best be used to evaluate the system's contribution to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. A study to test the evaluability of the goals could be conducted as soon as the agenda is adopted, so that Member States have the framework necessary to evaluate the United Nations system in 5, 10 or 15 years. It will be important to establish a baseline.

68. The 2014 report of the Secretary-General highlighted the role of independent evaluations and inspections in promoting and tracking the mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development. There is a potentially important role for evaluation to play in enhancing learning and accountability in United Nations system reviews under the high-level political forum and elsewhere. The United Nations system has been increasingly undertaking joint approaches to evaluation, which can help to better integrate the three dimensions.

69. An interim coordination mechanism for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development has been created by the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. It is intended to progressively enable the assessment of the United Nations system's response to challenges and priorities and achievement of the internationally agreed development goals in specific areas.

70. Overall, evaluation capacity across the United Nations system remains fairly uneven. The United Nations Evaluation Group is working to strengthen the evaluation functions of the United Nations system through the establishment of evaluation norms and standards, clear guidance on how to integrate gender responsiveness in evaluation systems, accountability frameworks that include peer reviews and system-wide action plan performance indicators, and further professionalization of evaluation. Reinforcing the capacity of the various evaluation entities across the system may give Member States an important evidence base with which to review and assess the work of the United Nations in their respective bodies.

71. Evaluating whether the United Nations system is adequately supporting the achievement of the sustainable development goals and mainstreaming the three dimensions of sustainable development in its work will require a slightly different kind of exercise and skill set. New methodologies and tools, training and resources may be required. Along with a robust evaluation capacity, organizations need to have systems in place to collect and analyse the requisite data.

Box 2
Evaluation to inform implementation

To inform the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), in partnership with the United Nations Evaluation Group, is carrying out a systematic review of gender in development. By reviewing more than 300 existing evaluations, the study will synthesize evidence on what works in implementing policies, programmes and projects to achieve gender equality and help to integrate gender responsiveness in national evaluation and systems.

72. The Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) has studied the monitoring and evaluation with regard to the Millennium Development Goals with a view to providing lessons learned for the post-2015 era. Importantly, it was seen that the Goals helped to significantly increase the amount, quality and accessibility of data. However, they lacked a strong evidence-based evaluation function for periodic review and mid-course correction. As a preliminary recommendation, OIOS

recommends that the Secretary-General formulate an overarching strategy and action plan to support coherent, coordinated and timely monitoring and evaluation with regard to the post-2015 development agenda, together with the capacity development needed to support decision-making, along the path to achieving the sustainable development goals.

B. Helping Member States to track and evaluate their own progress

73. In 2014, and earlier in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, Member States called upon the United Nations system to further strengthen the capacity of Member States for evaluation, in accordance with their national policies and priorities. The United Nations Evaluation Group is reflecting on how to respond to that mandate in the most rapid and effective way. Typically, United Nations system evaluation entities support countries in strengthening their own evaluation policies and systems. Capacity development should also include building skills and methods for national evaluation institutions, professional associations and practitioners, as well as systems for evaluation based on evidence-based recommendations to inform mid-course corrections.

74. Some Member States may ask the United Nations to assist in reviewing and evaluating their own progress towards the goals and targets for 2030. The precise contours of the architecture for reviewing progress in implementing the post-2015 development agenda will be developed in the intergovernmental negotiations, but it is already clear that the review framework will be voluntary and aimed at increasing effectiveness and exchanging lessons learned. It will make use of the entire United Nations system architecture. The Secretary-General, in his synthesis report on the post-2015 development agenda, suggested that the principal components of a review and monitoring framework could include a country-led, national component for accountability; a regional component for peer review; a global component for knowledge-sharing, as a forum for participatory, multi-stakeholder review; and a thematic component to chart global progress at regular intervals to help to identify challenges and bottlenecks and to mobilize action to address them.

75. Should the review architecture to be adopted in September 2015 have similar components, the United Nations will need to help to orchestrate and aggregate the many reviews conducted in various parts of the system on specific goals and targets.

76. Many such review and monitoring platforms already exist. The high-level political forum was established as a core platform for reviewing progress. The General Assembly is the overarching policy body and guides integrated and coordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, as well as follow-up to some specific outcomes. The Economic and Social Council assists with that follow-up and can orchestrate and coordinate the work of the United Nations system in various areas. A range of intergovernmental bodies also review progress on specific aspects of the post-2015 development agenda, as do various treaty-monitoring and other expert-level bodies.

77. It will be important to instil a sense of architecture in the existing arrangements and to draw from the reporting to existing platforms in order to ensure that the high-level political forum benefits from a holistic perspective. A platform for reviewing progress on the post-2015 agenda would need to include Governments and various other stakeholders and base its work on solid data and scientific

evidence. The United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda and its technical support team can help to take stock of existing arrangements that meet such criteria, to support Member States in such an exercise.

Box 3

Reviewing progress on specific sustainable development goals

The Committee on World Food Security is emerging as the most inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together on food security and nutrition for all. It has a natural advantage in overseeing progress on those goals and targets related to food security and nutrition. Three distinctive and unique features contribute to the Committee's legitimacy as a policy review and oversight mechanism: (a) the multi-stakeholder institutional structure, which provides the basis for meaningful participation by all relevant stakeholders; (b) the regular inclusion of structured food security and nutrition-related expertise in policy dialogue, which allows the Committee to conduct its consultation and negotiation processes with a solid base of evidence and practice; and (c) the linking of multi-stakeholder consultation and evidence-based knowledge to decision-making, which provides the basic science-policy framework for effective implementation by a variety of actors at the global, regional and national levels.

VII. Engaging in partnerships for sustainable development

78. Intuitive to the sustainable development approach is strong engagement with multi-stakeholder partnerships, networks and coalitions of actors around specific themes.

79. The United Nations now has a long history of engagement in multi-stakeholder partnerships. With its presence at the country level, and now more interlinked through the standard operating procedures on "delivering as one", the United Nations system is able to co-design programmes with stakeholders, facilitate nationally led, inclusive dialogues and provide a platform for shared capacities and operations. Much support has also been directed at forging South-South and triangular partnerships. Some experiences have proved successful in mobilizing resources, improving programme delivery and helping to build consensus around sensitive issues. However, such initiatives need to be carefully built, overseen and implemented, so as to ensure that they promote systemic change and do not exacerbate fragmentation of financing and institutions. Their advancement of the three dimensions of sustainable development needs to be ensured.

80. Evidence shows that multi-stakeholder efforts, combined with official development assistance and complemented by South-South and triangular cooperation, can leverage financial and other resource flows from both the public and private sectors, as well as mobilize technology, research and human capacity. Such initiatives as "Every woman, every child", Sustainable Energy for All and the

Zero Hunger Challenge have shown that, with leadership, coherence and accountability, the multi-stakeholder partnership model works in mobilizing new funding, catalysing innovation and achieving scale.

81. Multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives often possess extensive knowledge and expertise on the implementation of sustainable development commitments, including on best practices, governance structures and implementation of methodologies. Ease of access to such vast knowledge will be crucial for building, managing and leveraging successful and sustainable multi-stakeholder partnerships for achieving the sustainable development goals.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

82. Strengths, challenges and gaps identified in the 2013 and 2014 reports of the Secretary-General remain relevant to the current discussion on mainstreaming the three dimensions of sustainable development. The impact of the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals is already being felt as it drives the elaboration of more integrated approaches to implementation. The United Nations system needs to further strengthen its efforts to prepare for helping countries to implement the universal development agenda and review progress at all levels.

83. Coherent intergovernmental oversight and guidance will be essential. The high-level political forum for sustainable development, as a core platform, the Charter of the United Nations and other bodies and intergovernmental platforms will all play a role in reviewing implementation. The United Nations system must support their work in a coordinated fashion.

84. It is suggested that Member States:

(a) Invite the Secretary-General to map United Nations system support in the areas addressed by the proposed sustainable development goals and encourage reflection, including within the dialogues of the Economic and Social Council, on how to ensure that such support is provided in an integrated and coordinated manner, reflecting interrelations between the goals;

(b) Invite United Nations system organizations and their governing bodies to assess the asymmetry between economic, social and environmental issues in their work and the operational framework of the United Nations system and its various entities;

(c) Call upon the United Nations system to make further efforts to align strategic plans with the future sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda and integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions;

(d) Invite the United Nations system to undertake more systematic initiatives to break work silos, encourage staff to engage in intersectoral dialogue, and develop new approaches to supporting integrated policymaking and collaboration, both within and outside their own organizations. Organizations should address internal incentives that restrict the recognition of outputs produced jointly by some entities and intersectoral lending of staff time, or ensure that staff reporting and evaluation frameworks put a premium on collaboration outside one's unit;

(e) Encourage United Nations system organizations to implement the Environment Management Group framework for advancing environmental and social sustainability in the United Nations system;

(f) Invite the Secretary-General, as part of the next survey for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, to seek the views of programme countries on how effectively the United Nations system is supporting them in developing integrated policies and institutions to achieve the sustainable development goals and to report on operational aspects in the context of the next review;

(g) Invite United Nations system organizations to reflect on innovative arrangements to support the work of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and other intergovernmental platforms, building on the technical support team's experience and approach;

(h) Request the Secretary-General to report on progress to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, and to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 69/242, contains an assessment of the assistance received by the Palestinian people, needs still unmet and proposals for responding to them. It provides a description of efforts made by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Government, donors and civil society, to support the Palestinian population and institutions.

During the reporting period (May 2014-March 2015), the situation on the ground deteriorated following the breakdown of peace negotiations. The United Nations continued its efforts to respond to humanitarian and development challenges in the context of occupation, but placed particular focus on providing humanitarian assistance during and after the conflict between Gaza and Israel and support to the Palestinian Government of national consensus. The Organization, while maintaining that full lifting of the closures of Gaza was required, brokered a temporary agreement between the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine to enable the entry, use and monitoring of "dual-use" material into Gaza to allow reconstruction work and the rehabilitation of damaged facilities at scale.

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The 2015 Strategic Response Plan, requiring $705 million, outlines the programming to meet urgent humanitarian needs throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. To complement that programming and respond to the governance, recovery, reconstruction and structural development needs that have been compounded by the conflict, the United Nations Support Plan for the Transformation of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016 details the contribution of the United Nations to the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017 and requests $2.1 billion. In addition, at the request of the Government, the United Nations, together with the European Union and the World Bank, carried out a detailed needs assessment to further inform the recovery and reconstruction work in Gaza.

The Government continued to implement the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. In support of those efforts, the United Nations continued to implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2016. The financial resources required for the assistance provided through the Framework are some $1.2 billion.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 69/242, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution, containing an assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people and an assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them. Also included is a summary of key political developments and challenges relevant to the reporting period, as the international community continued to work to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, especially during and after the escalation of hostilities in Gaza, and to support the State-building efforts of the Government of the State of Palestine and to promote negotiations between the parties. The reporting period is from May 2014 to March 2015.

2. Information on the living and socioeconomic conditions of the Palestinian people is provided in several reports prepared by other United Nations agencies, in particular: the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (to be issued); the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/69/13); and the report of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in September 2014.

3. The humanitarian, economic and development needs of the Palestinian people are reflected in several complementary strategic and resource mobilization documents. The 2015 Strategic Response Plan seeks $705 million to meet the most urgent humanitarian needs by enhancing the protective environment and tackling the food insecurity of the most vulnerable groups throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. To address the governance, recovery, reconstruction and structural development needs that have been compounded by the conflict, the United Nations Support Plan for the Transformation of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016 details the United Nations contribution to the Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017 and requests $2.1 billion. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework presents the United Nations strategic response to the Palestinian development priorities contained in the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty.

4. During the conflict, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process worked with the parties and the international community to negotiate humanitarian pauses and ceasefires. In response to the unprecedented reconstruction needs of the Gaza Strip, the Office brokered a temporary agreement between the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine to enable the entry, use and monitoring of "dual-use" material into Gaza to allow reconstruction work and the rehabilitation of damaged facilities at scale. Throughout the year, the Office continued its efforts to support the peace process and to ensure effective coordination among the Government of the State of Palestine, the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Israel. It also continued to document the economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and to develop policies and programmes to improve them.

II. Overview of the current situation

A. Political context

5. Since the collapse of the peace talks brokered by the United States of America in April 2014, negotiations between the parties have not resumed. Negative developments thereafter, primarily the abduction and killing of three Israeli teenagers in the West Bank and of a Palestinian teenager in East Jerusalem, in addition to the conflict, reduced the prospects of resuming meaningful talks.

6. On 30 December, the Security Council rejected a Palestinian-drafted resolution submitted by Jordan in which it would have, among other things, called for a final peace agreement to be reached within a year and an end to the Israeli occupation by the end of 2017. The resolution failed to garner the minimum 9 of 15 votes.

7. On 31 December, the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, signed instruments of accession to 18 international treaties, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and lodged a declaration accepting the Court's jurisdiction since 13 June 2014. On 2 January, 16 instruments of accession were submitted to the Secretary-General, who accepted them in deposit after having ascertained that they were in due and proper form. In response, Israel began to suspend the transfer of tax revenue that it collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority and was, at the time of writing, withholding the amounts for December, January and February.

8. Quartet envoys continued to meet regularly and to engage the parties to encourage them to resume peace negotiations. On 8 February, the principals met in Munich, Germany, and declared that they would remain actively engaged in preparing for a resumption of the peace process, including regular and direct outreach to Arab States.

9. Long-overdue Palestinian elections were not conducted during the reporting period. In Israel, the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, dissolved his coalition Government on 2 December. General elections were held on 17 March, some two years ahead of schedule.

10. The situation in the West Bank, already tense owing to a hunger strike by more than 100 prisoners and an increase in demolitions, worsened on 12 June when three Israeli teenagers were kidnapped and murdered near Hebron, reportedly by Hamas affiliates. Hamas rejected the accusation but issued statements in which it glorified the perpetrators. A Palestinian teenager from East Jerusalem was abducted and killed in a retaliatory attack on 2 July; three Israelis were charged with the crime and are currently on trial. During intensive search operations in the West Bank after the kidnapping of the Israeli teenagers, including in major population centres, 6 Palestinians were killed, more than 800 injured and more than 500 reportedly arrested. A large majority of those arrested were Hamas affiliates and more than 50 Palestinians previously released as part of the so-called "Shalit deal".

11. Settlement activity continued apace, including significant announcements by the Israeli authorities in June and October that they would construct thousands of units. Following those announcements and the conflict, tensions increased in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Individual attacks by Palestinians, including

against the light rail system in Jerusalem, were met by punitive house demolitions and further access restrictions by Israel, including to Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount. Clashes there occurred on a weekly basis until 13 November, when the Secretary of State of the United States, John F. Kerry, and the King of Jordan, King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, held separate meetings in Amman with the President of the State of Palestine and the Prime Minister of Israel and agreement was struck to reduce the tensions. Israel has since lifted access restrictions on male Palestinian worshippers.

12. The deterioration of the situation in the West Bank also included plans to transfer Bedouins, including from the strategic E1 area, to relocation sites; increases in demolitions of Palestinian structures, including residences; clashes between Palestinians and settlers; and an escalation in violent clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and the Israeli security forces resulting in casualties on both sides, including Palestinian casualties caused by live fire. A mass hunger strike by Palestinians imprisoned in Israel was suspended on 25 June when an agreement was reached with the Israeli authorities to begin negotiations on prisoner conditions, including detention without charge.

13. In Gaza, at a time when the de facto authorities were under increasing financial pressure resulting from the closure of smuggling tunnels by Egypt, the relative calm prevailing since November 2012 unravelled following the murder of the three Israeli teenagers and the ensuing arrest of hundreds of Hamas supporters throughout the West Bank. There was also an increase in rockets fired from Gaza and Israeli air strikes on Gaza beginning on 24 June, including 85 rockets fired at Israel by Hamas and other militant groups on 7 July. From 8 July to 26 August, a 50-day Israeli military operation was conducted in and around Gaza. It was the third major conflict — and the longest and most violent — between Israel and Palestinian armed groups since Hamas assumed control of Gaza in 2007. Israel struck more than 5,000 locations in Gaza and reportedly demolished 32 tunnels, including 14 with openings inside Israel. In excess of 3,500 rockets were fired by Hamas and other Palestinian militants from Gaza at Israel; another 700 were intercepted by the Iron Dome defence system. More than 2,200 Palestinians, mostly civilians and including some 500 children, were killed. On the Israeli side, 66 Israel Defense Forces personnel and five civilians, including a child and a foreign national, were killed.

14. On 26 August, following several humanitarian pauses, an open-ended ceasefire brokered by Egypt went into effect. The agreement provided for a comprehensive ceasefire, the opening of the crossings between Gaza and Israel to allow for the entry of humanitarian assistance and reconstruction material, the expansion of the fishing zone and the continuation of indirect negotiations between the parties on all other topics within a month of the acceptance of the agreement. On 23 September, Israelis and Palestinians met in Cairo to discuss strengthening the ceasefire arrangements. At the time of writing, no additional meetings had been held and the ceasefire remained fragile, with Palestinian armed groups frequently test-firing rockets.

15. At a donor conference held on 12 October in Cairo, the international community pledged some $5.4 billion for the reconstruction needs of Gaza and to support the budget of the Government of the State of Palestine until 2017. The United Nations, while maintaining that full lifting of the closures of Gaza was

required in accordance with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), brokered a temporary agreement between the Governments of Israel and the State of Palestine to enable the entry, use and monitoring of "dual-use" material, such as aggregate, bars and cement, into Gaza for reconstruction. That temporary reconstruction mechanism has to date enabled some 88,000 households to purchase construction material to repair shelters. It has also processed more than 100 construction projects, including for housing, water networks and schools, of which 56 have been approved.

16. The pace of reconstruction remained far below the expectations of the population in Gaza, however, primarily as a result of the low level of disbursement of pledges made in Cairo and the lack of progress in tackling the underlying causes of instability. In addition, only limited financial support was provided to United Nations agencies carrying out vital humanitarian operations in Gaza. At the end of January, UNRWA suspended its cash assistance programme that supported repairs and provided rental subsidies to Palestinian refugee families owing to a lack of funds. Consequently, demonstrators attacked the compound housing the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process in Gaza on 29 January, damaging the facility and assets.

17. The Palestinian divide continued notwithstanding the "Beach Camp" intra-Palestinian unity accord signed by the Government of the State of Palestine and Hamas on 23 April and the formation of an interim technocratic Government of national consensus by the President on 2 June on the basis of the Palestine Liberation Organization commitments of recognition of Israel, non-violence and adherence to previous agreements. The Government was broadly accepted by the international community, including the United Nations. On 25 September, Palestinian factions reached an understanding to facilitate the implementation of the unity accord, including by allowing the Government to take up its governance and security functions in Gaza, including control over the crossings, and effectively steer reconstruction efforts. Those efforts have yet to bear fruit, however, partly owing to the limited progress made on much-needed civil service reform and the consequent delays in paying the thousands of civil servants hired by the de facto authorities since June 2007.

B. Humanitarian and socioeconomic context

Economic and fiscal developments

18. According to the Ministry of Finance, while the Government continued to implement key economic and fiscal reforms, fiscal consolidation progressed slowly during the reporting period. The fiscal strain is evident through the continued accumulation of arrears and high public debt. In 2014, both total revenue and total expenditure were 5 per cent above budget, with net lending reaching 170 per cent of the budgeted amount. This resulted in a total deficit of $1.64 billion. In 2014, the Government received just in excess of $1 billion in direct budget support, a sum lower than projected.

19. According to the International Monetary Fund, economic activity contracted in 2014, following the conflict and mounting political tensions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. It estimates that the real gross domestic product fell by nearly 1 per cent, the first contraction since 2006, with gross domestic product

declining by about 15 per cent in Gaza but rising by 4.5 per cent in the West Bank, with a sharp slowdown in the third quarter.

20. The International Monetary Fund indicates that a high degree of uncertainty and challenges are likely to prevent a strong economic recovery in 2015. Notably, beginning in January, the Government of Israel stopped transferring clearance revenue collected on goods imported into the West Bank and Gaza to the Government of the State of Palestine. Such revenue represents about two thirds of net revenue and is essential to the Palestinian budget and economy. Consequently, according to the Ministry of Finance, wage payments and other public spending were cut.

21. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, unemployment remains high. At the end of 2014, 26.9 per cent of Palestinians were unemployed, an increase over the 2013 year-end rate of 23.4 per cent. The global average masks significant differences by sex, age and location. A total of 23.8 per cent of Palestinians males were unemployed, compared with 36.5 per cent of females. In addition, unemployment remains particularly high among young people, with 45.6 per cent of people between 20 and 24 years of age and 35 per cent of people between 25 and 29 years of age unemployed. Moreover, unemployment is significantly higher in the Gaza Strip (42.8 per cent) than in the West Bank (17.4 per cent).

Humanitarian developments

22. Between 1 May 2014 and 28 February 2015, 2,295 Palestinians were killed (2,245 in Gaza, including some 1,500 civilians; 50 civilians in the West Bank; overall, 569 children and 297 women) and 16,506 injured (11,233 in Gaza, including 3,436 children and 3,540 women, and 5,273 in the West Bank, including 1,011 children and 100 women) by the Israeli security forces. The vast majority of those deaths and injuries (2,219 deaths and 10,500 injuries) were a result of the conflict. During the reporting period, 85 Israelis (5 civilians as a result of the conflict and 12 civilians in the West Bank) were killed.

23. During the conflict, 11 UNRWA personnel were killed and 118 UNRWA installations, including 83 schools and 10 health centres, were damaged. On seven occasions, UNRWA schools being used as designated emergency shelters were either hit or struck by shells or other munitions in response to reports of firing from adjacent or nearby facilities. On three such occasions, persons sheltering at the schools were killed and many others injured.

24. In addition to fatalities and injuries, the conflict caused unprecedented displacement, with up to 500,000 Palestinians forced to flee their homes at the height of the conflict. Some 293,000 sought shelter in 85 UNRWA schools serving as designated emergency shelters. At the time of writing, UNRWA was continuing to provide shelter and basic services to almost 10,000 internally displaced persons living in 14 Agency-run collective centres. An estimated 100,000 homes were severely destroyed or damaged and severe damage was caused to public infrastructure, including the sole power plant in Gaza and critical water and sanitation infrastructure.

25. In the West Bank, demolitions of housing and livelihood assets continued during the reporting period, with 687 structures demolished in Area C and East

Jerusalem, displacing 1,330 persons, around 60 per cent of whom were children. At least 6,000 persons were affected by the demolitions.

26. According to the Israel Prison Service, 163 children (159 boys and 4 girls) between 14 and 17 years of age were being held in Israeli military detention for alleged security violations as at the end of January.

Movement, humanitarian access and operational space

27. In Gaza, restrictions on land and sea access imposed by the Government of Israel remained in place. The United Nations effectively engaged with the Government on humanitarian access during the conflict to allow for the unimpeded access of humanitarian supplies, but the Gaza Strip remained closed.

28. Access to and movement of Palestinians between most Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, remained restricted during the reporting period. Those restrictions on Palestinian access to land, social services and economic opportunities in East Jerusalem and Area C hinder development efforts, resulting in deteriorating living conditions and increased vulnerability.

29. From May 2014 to February 2015, at least 276 incidents of delayed or denied access by United Nations and non-governmental organization staff members were reported at Israeli checkpoints. Around 76 of the incidents occurred as United Nations staff crossed the barrier on the Jerusalem periphery.

Barrier

30. The construction of the barrier continued in the north-west of the Bethlehem Governorate, as did rerouting works near Khirbet Jubara in Tulkarem and around Qalqiliya. The United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory established pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/17 continued its outreach and claim intake activities. More than 46,000 claims and 550,000 supporting documents have been collected. Claim intake activities in the Tubas, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqiliya, Salfit, Ramallah and Hebron Governorates have been completed, while outreach and claim intake activities in the Bethlehem Governorate are at an advanced stage.

III. United Nations response

31. Through the 2014 Strategic Response Plan, the United Nations and its partners continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and protection assistance, including food assistance, to 1.9 million vulnerable Palestinians, in particular in Gaza. In addition, the United Nations and its partners coordinated and delivered humanitarian assistance, including food and shelter assistance, through the Gaza Crisis Appeal. The humanitarian strategies are aligned with the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017 and United Nations development programming.

32. The United Nations implemented the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, a strategic planning framework that guides United Nations development programming for 2014-2016 and is aligned with the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. It places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming with the aim of

enhancing human security, thereby laying the foundation for human development objectives in a context of occupation. To support recovery and reconstruction efforts in Gaza, the United Nations Support Plan for the Transformation of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016, which contributes to the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017, is aimed at tackling governance and structural development issues.

A. Human and social development

33. During the reporting period, including during the conflict, the United Nations continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian assistance, including food assistance, to more than 1 million people, water and sanitation assistance to more than 1.5 million people and health and nutrition services to some 2.5 million people in the occupied Palestinian territory.

34. United Nations development programming focused on capacity development, infrastructure and the provision of direct assistance and basic services. As outlined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the work is centred on six strategic areas: economic empowerment, livelihoods, decent work and food security; governance, rule of law, justice and human rights; education; health care; social protection; and urban development, natural resource management and infrastructure. The financial resources required are estimated at $1.2 billion, of which $657 million had been mobilized at the time of writing.

35. Below are illustrative examples of the types of assistance provided by the United Nations.

Education

36. Nine United Nations agencies continued to support the implementation of the Education for All package for the State of Palestine, which is led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to meet capacity-building needs in inclusive and child-friendly education and early childhood development. Work included supporting the Ministry in the opening of 47 preschool classrooms (33 in the West Bank and 14 in Gaza) and for the implementation of the new strategy on early childhood development. In addition, 77 pilot schools in the West Bank and Gaza (including 12 UNRWA schools) benefited from various education interventions, including school feeding programmes and capacity development programmes focusing on inclusive and child-friendly education, early childhood development and special educational needs. Before the conflict, United Nations agencies also improved access to education through the rehabilitation of 34 schools in the West Bank and 37 schools in Gaza, benefiting 34,000 children. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), along with its national partners, supported safe and protected access for some 6,900 children to schools in 18 locations, including checkpoints, gates and schools most vulnerable to settler violence and harassment by the Israel Defense Forces.

37. UNRWA provided free primary education to more than 290,000 children enrolled in 349 elementary and preparatory schools throughout the West Bank and Gaza. In Gaza, 86.5 per cent of the 252 UNRWA schools currently operate on a double-shift or triple-shift system (an increase from 71 per cent in 2013). The increase is the result of a continuously growing population and several UNRWA

school buildings being used as shelters for 10,000 internally displaced persons. As a result of the conflict, the beginning of the new school year for some 240,000 pupils in UNRWA schools was delayed by three weeks. UNRWA conducted psychosocial and recreational activities and counselling sessions to help children in their transition back to school.

38. UNICEF provided supplies and equipment and trained 50 staff in the early detection of hearing and speech difficulties, covering 8,000 children in government schools in Gaza. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) trained 25 pupils to be young educators on sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and young people. Those trained reached an additional 680 pupils through after-school activities throughout the West Bank. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to implement the Al Fakhoura Scholarship Programme for Gazan pupils, supporting 225 additional scholarships during the reporting period to bring the total number of scholarships provided to 445.

39. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established 12 libraries (10 in the West Bank and 2 in Gaza) accessible to persons with disabilities and trained 10 newly recruited librarians.

Health

40. UNRWA continued to be a major provider of health-care services, operating 42 health-care facilities, 22 primary health-care centres, a hospital and a non-communicable-disease referral centre in Gaza and the West Bank and employing more than 2,000 staff. Annually, an average of 26,000 Palestine refugees in the West Bank received assistance to meet hospital-care costs. During the conflict, UNRWA health services were extended to all Palestinians in Gaza.

41. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) supported the Ministry of Health in procuring polio vaccines and coordinated a national immunization campaign, which benefited 639,481 children. UNICEF also trained 250 Ministry and UNRWA staff on advanced immunization skills. WHO conducted a mass public awareness campaign on Ebola virus disease.

42. UNICEF completed the rehabilitation of neonatal units in six government hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank and enhanced the skills of 285 health-care professionals in an effort to improve neonatal health care. It also continued to support the Ministry of Health in implementing the baby-friendly hospital initiative in 11 government hospitals and reached 4,554 high-risk women and their newborns through the postnatal home visits programme.

Water and sanitation

43. In the West Bank, UNDP improved access to natural resources through the construction or rehabilitation of 229 water cisterns and the rehabilitation of water networks and springs. In addition, 52 wastewater treatment units were installed, benefiting 52 households in four rural communities. In Gaza, UNDP completed the rehabilitation and expansion of a solid waste dumping site. UNICEF continued to improve access to water by supporting the Palestinian Water Authority and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility in the construction and installation of a short-term low-volume seawater desalination plant in Gaza. It also provided water storage tanks to households in the access-restricted areas, which benefited at least

7,112 people, and completed construction work to improve access to adequate sanitation for at least 900 people. UNICEF supported improved access to water through water delivery and water network repairs, benefiting 64,099 people in the West Bank.

44. UNICEF also continued to support the water and sanitation in schools programme, which provided improved and sustainable access to safe water and sanitation for 44,342 pupils through the rehabilitation and construction of water and sanitation facilities, while addressing the special needs of pupils with disabilities in 91 schools in the West Bank and Gaza. It installed solar distillation units in three schools (1 in the West Bank and 2 in Gaza), providing around 800 pupils with clean drinking water.

Employment

45. United Nations agencies continued to support income-generating and self-employment opportunities for vulnerable Palestinians. UNDP targeted around 3,500 families throughout the West Bank and Gaza and focused on income-generating activities in microenterprise and small enterprise development. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), through 62 women's centres, focused on job opportunities in food processing and marketing. The programme directly benefited 761 women workers, and more than 43,400 women benefited from the psychosocial counselling, legal counselling, training and other services provided at the centres. Forty centres have reached financial sustainability. The activity also benefited 348 schools and more than 134,351 schoolchildren who received healthy and affordable snacks made by women from the community-based centres. UN-Women also provided training for 70 women in the West Bank and Gaza on designing and producing high-quality marketable Palestinian handicrafts. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supported 27 cooperatives (including 6 women's cooperatives), helping 1,285 persons to achieve improved economic conditions through training to strengthen their marketing skills and the provision of tools to improve the marketability of their products.

46. The International Labour Organization continued to implement a programme to support livelihoods and job opportunities in the fishery sector in Gaza, which facilitated the development of a recovery plan and provided management training to cooperative members. In addition, UNDP supported some 520 farmers with asset replacement and business development services.

47. UNDP supported access to trade information by launching the first Palestinian trade portal in October 2014. It provides Palestinian businesses with information on trade agreements, conditions for export to specific countries, feasibility analysis, procedures and guidelines, in addition to allowing international partners to gain access to information on Palestinian businesses and products and services.

Targeted social protection

48. In Gaza, UNRWA distributed 305,424 food parcels to 21,286 Palestine refugee households through the social safety net programme, but was forced to suspend cash assistance owing to budgetary constraints in January. It also distributed 108,159 food parcels and $1.06 million in supplementary cash assistance to 9,509 Palestine refugee households through its social safety net programme in the West Bank. The

World Food Programme (WFP) continued to support the Government's social safety net programme, through which it provided more 211,020 people in the State of Palestine, both in the West Bank and Gaza, with food and food vouchers.

Culture

49. UNESCO continued to support the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage in the West Bank and Gaza, with 12 historic sites renovated for public use and another 16 historic sites under renovation.

50. UNDP supported the establishment of the first Palestinian public library in the Old City of Jerusalem, including by providing equipment and furniture and undertaking rehabilitation work.

Food security and agriculture

51. United Nations agencies, including FAO, continued to improve water availability and management to enhance agricultural production in Area C of the West Bank. A total of 1,400 people in Area C have benefited from the rehabilitation of wells and 7,250 dunums of agricultural land are now again irrigated efficiently. FAO also rehabilitated five wells, benefiting 1,400 persons, and UNDP rehabilitated another 10, benefiting 300 new farms in highly marginalized areas. UNDP constructed 36 km of agricultural access roads and 120 water cisterns to enable supplementary irrigation.

52. UNDP finalized the development of an additional 1,976 dunums of land for marginalized farmers in areas of the West Bank that are in direct proximity to Israeli settlements or in the seam zones, bringing the total reclaimed land to some 13,200 dunums. It also supported land development activities to ensure the sustainable use of land.

53. Through the agriculture sector revitalization activities of FAO, 1,002 farmers received intensive training on pest management and global good agricultural practices certification.

Human rights, women, children and young people

54. Five United Nations agencies continued a joint programme to strengthen respect for the human rights of persons with disabilities through legislation, in compliance with the Palestinian Disability Law and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to mainstream considerations for persons with disabilities in schools and employment services.

55. United Nations agencies continued to support the special needs of women, including by tackling gender based violence. UN-Women provided capacity-building activities for officers of the Palestinian Civil Police in family protection units to respond to cases of violence against women with a view to safeguarding rights and due process. It continued to support the Mehwar Centre for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families in the West Bank, which provided 355 legal advisory, consultation and representation services. UNRWA established referral systems in Gaza and the West Bank to tackle gender-based violence. More than 900 survivors of gender-based violence were identified and legal and psychosocial services were provided to more than 700 persons referred.

56. United Nations agencies conducted awareness-raising activities on various gender, youth and human rights issues. UNRWA reached more than 14,000 Palestine refugees in community-awareness and prevention activities relating to gender-based violence, children's and human rights, domestic violence, neglect and sexual abuse. UNESCO conducted an advocacy campaign on gender-based violence in 11 governorates of the West Bank, targeting young people from marginalized rural areas. With UNICEF support, more than 6,500 children vulnerable to violence, abuse, exploitation and in contact with the law benefited from child protection services provided by 14 child protection networks and 11 police family and juvenile protection units. In partnership with the Higher Council of Palestinian Youth and Sport and non-governmental organization partners, United Nations agencies reached 122,755 adolescents, who participated in and benefited from educational and recreation activities in safe spaces.

57. UNICEF continued to lead the inter-agency working group for the monitoring and reporting of grave violations against children in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009). The working group continued to document grave violations and informed programmatic action and advocacy. Its documentation of the treatment of children in military detention also informed the continuing dialogue with the Israeli authorities, specifically in relation to the implementation of pilot-testing of the issuance of summonses in lieu of night arrests.

Environment, housing and urban development

58. UNDP continued to implement additional phases of the construction of the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park through the provision of essential infrastructure services, including water, electricity, buildings and structures and telecommunications.

59. UNDP provided support for adequate housing to 160 low-income families in East Jerusalem, improved housing for 840 families in marginalized areas in the West Bank and access to renewable energy for 1,796 families in the West Bank.

B. United Nations system emergency assistance

60. The United Nations and humanitarian partners coordinated humanitarian assistance during the conflict, including provision of water, food assistance, shelter and non-food items to 340,000 displaced persons at the height of the conflict in United Nations and government shelters, in addition to support to internally displaced persons with host families through the distribution of humanitarian aid. Psychosocial support was provided to thousands of children and caregivers in shelters. UNRWA provided in-kind food commodities to more than 830,000 Palestine refugees and turned its facilities into designated emergency shelters. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs coordinated the humanitarian response on behalf of the international community.

61. The 2015 Strategic Response Plan is seeking $705 million, of which nearly 80 per cent is for Gaza, nearly double the amount requested for 2014.

62. In addition, the UNRWA Emergency Appeal for 2015 is requesting $414.4 million to meet the needs of some 2 million Palestine refugees in Gaza and

the West Bank. Most of the funding requested (88 per cent) is for Gaza. The Emergency Appeal for 2014 mobilized $127 million of the $300 million requested, with most of the funds mobilized allocated to Gaza.

63. In Gaza, shelter remains the primary humanitarian need, with some 100,000 persons remaining displaced as a result of the damage and destruction of housing stemming from the conflict and the slow pace of reconstruction.

64. The energy situation in the Gaza Strip remains extremely fragile. During the reporting period, the United Nations, with contributions from Turkey, put in place a safety net to replenish the on-site reserves for essential services (e.g. health and water sanitation). Nevertheless, the current situation highlights the need to develop a structural solution to the energy problems facing Gaza.

65. In the immediate aftermath of the conflict, and at the request of United Nations entities, the United Nations Mine Action Service surveyed and cleared 105 key infrastructure sites that had been damaged or destroyed, including the Gaza power plant, to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Emergency food support

66. In Gaza, UNRWA provided half of the population (868,000 refugees) with food aid. UNRWA and WFP provided food parcels to more than 340,000 individuals per day at the peak of the conflict. They also jointly undertook an exceptional distribution of basic food rations targeting families (620,000 individuals) who typically are not eligible to receive regular food assistance from them. In total, WFP reached more than 1.4 million people in Gaza with food assistance and provided vouchers to an additional 300,000 internally displaced persons.

67. In the West Bank, UNRWA and WFP continued their joint assistance programme for marginalized Bedouins and herders, distributing food to more than 30,000 individuals. In response to a winter storm in January, WFP distributed food to some 500 people. UNRWA, through a partnership with WFP, introduced electronic food vouchers throughout the West Bank, benefiting 45,000 individuals. Through the programme, some $2.4 million was spent on food and staples at local shops.

Emergency income generation

68. In Gaza, the UNRWA job creation programme provided 23,419 jobs, while more than 5,000 direct and indirect jobs were provided through UNRWA construction projects, accounting for 9.4 per cent of the employed workforce in the Gaza Strip.

69. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided emergency cash-for-work support to some 6,000 households (35,900 individuals) in 19 Palestine refugee camps. This provided a cash injection of around $7.5 million to food-insecure households. Owing to a shortage of funds, UNRWA no longer operates the cash-for-work programme outside the camps, but instead supports non-camp refugees with electronic food vouchers.

Emergency health support

70. Through UNRWA support, 18,292 Palestine refugees in Gaza received individual psychosocial counselling, while 10,806 group counselling sessions were conducted. In addition, 37,549 public awareness sessions were held in schools, health centres and other facilities. During the conflict, health focal points in each UNRWA designated emergency shelter and collective centres serving 300,000 internally displaced persons conducted health awareness campaigns to control and prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases and undertook 129,662 medical consultations.

71. The UNRWA emergency health programme in the West Bank supported six mobile health clinics operating in 56 locations with poor access to primary health services. The clinics served some 121,000 individuals and delivered close to 130,000 patient consultations throughout the year. In addition, UNRWA supported 49 vulnerable Bedouin and herder communities in Area C with mobile community mental health services.

72. WHO facilitated the delivery of critical life-saving drugs and medical disposables in Gaza. It also provided urgently needed technical assistance, medical equipment and spare parts, especially for generators and medical equipment damaged as a result of the unstable power supply and the frequent blackouts caused by fuel shortages.

73. UNFPA provided the Ministry of Health with critical medication and supplies to sustain reproductive health services at maternities and primary health-care clinics in Gaza. It supported mobile health teams serving displaced persons with antenatal and postnatal care, benefiting 1,380 people, including 676 pregnant women in shelters. It also distributed 882 dignity kits to internally displaced women and girls in host communities.

74. UNFPA supported national partners in providing psychosocial support to 105 health-care professionals in the primary health centres in Gaza and 3,883 persons from the most affected families.

Emergency water and sanitation support

75. UNRWA supported water and sanitation and health-care providers operating inside and outside the Palestine refugee camps in Gaza with fuel and other supplies needed for critical operations and managed solid waste collection in all eight camps. In 2014, more than 10 million litres of fuel were provided by UNRWA, including 6.3 million litres of diesel distributed to health-care and water and sanitation providers. During the conflict, UNRWA provided potable and non-potable water to designated emergency shelters.

76. Through its partners, UNICEF delivered safe drinking water to 81,500 people using tankers. In addition, more than 8,000 people had access to water filling stations during the first three months after the conflict.

77. Through support from UNICEF, 411,612 people in Gaza benefited from improved access to water through water network repairs, including as a result of the provision of spare parts for generators used by the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, the establishment of water filling stations and the installation of domestic water storage tanks in the access-restricted areas. Another 175,768 people benefited

from wastewater network repairs, the rehabilitation of septic tanks and the rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in those areas.

78. UNICEF and WFP distributed 14,000 vouchers, enabling 84,000 people to have access to basic hygiene supplies in the first few weeks after the ceasefire.

Emergency agriculture support

79. In response to the conflict, FAO distributed fodder and water tanks to 5,000 livestock herders and material to safeguard the assets of 240 herders.

80. In Area C, FAO provided 2,412 livestock herders with material and training to mitigate the risk of economic shock, distributed equipment for the safeguarding of assets to 1,800 herders and rehabilitated cisterns to the benefit of 1,056 herders. In addition, it provided training and cash transfers for land rehabilitation to 117 farmers.

Emergency education support

81. Following the conflict, United Nations agencies supported children as they returned to school. The United Nations Mine Action Service surveyed and cleared all UNRWA schools and 21 government schools of explosive remnants of war, allowing more than 250,000 children to return safely to school. UNRWA implemented a three-phase emergency education programme, focusing on providing safe spaces and ensuring the psychosocial well-being of children as part of their transition back to school. UNICEF procured and distributed education supplies, benefiting 130,000 children, and teaching aid and recreational kits for 395 schools.

82. UNICEF supported the training of 11,000 teachers and other education personnel on classroom management and psychosocial support to prepare them for the new school year. To respond to the special needs of younger children, it distributed early childhood development materials to 11,300 preschoolers.

Emergency housing support

83. The United Nations Office for Project Services established a materials monitoring unit to coordinate and ensure end-use monitoring of the construction material intended to support the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism.

84. The United Nations Mine Action Service and UNDP worked to remove rubble resulting from the conflict. The Service cleared and safely removed explosive remnants of war from 84 areas and UNDP removed more than 60,000 tons of rubble of a total of 2.2 million tons.

85. At the time of writing, UNRWA was continuing to provide shelter and basic services to almost 8,000 internally displaced persons living in 13 Agency-run collective centres. It provided transitional shelter cash assistance, such as rental subsidies, to 7,653 families (worth $7.1 million) and cash assistance to make small shelter repairs to 69,717 families (worth $79.5 million). In addition, UNDP provided $8 million in cash assistance to more than 4,000 non-refugee families displaced by the conflict, allowing them to have access to temporary shelter while their homes were being reconstructed.

86. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided cash assistance to more than 3,370 individuals after their homes were demolished by the Israeli authorities.

87. Through support from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 280 poor households, 100 of which were headed by women, moved into houses newly constructed or renovated in Gaza and West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

C. United Nations system support to Palestinian institutions

88. At the request of the Government, the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union, together with the Government, embarked on a detailed needs assessment to provide a comprehensive assessment of the damages, losses and recovery needs in the governance, productive, infrastructure and social sectors, following the escalation of hostilities in Gaza, to inform recovery planning and prioritization of interventions.

89. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights continued to work with the Palestinian authorities, the Independent Commission for Human Rights and civil society to ensure that the commitments set forth in the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty were implemented in accordance with the new legal commitments stemming from the Government's accession to various human rights treaties. The Office, the Commission and several United Nations agencies embarked on an intensive programme to build the capacity of and support ministries, including through substantive training on the provisions of the treaties and on the requirements for effective monitoring and reporting as the ministries prepared their reform programme and compiled their initial reports for the Geneva-based treaty bodies.

90. In addition, UN-Women continued to support the Commission in monitoring women's access to justice in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Commission published its first report in June 2014, highlighting the challenges facing women in gaining access to justice and the need to apply the Criminal Code and other laws relating to women's rights, in addition to women's right to defence and legal representation.

91. WFP supported the Civil Defence in building capacity in the area of emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction, including the development of an information management system that integrates a disaster preparedness web portal to raise public awareness of risks, a smartphone tool for emergency needs assessments and geospatial data infrastructure. The tools were handed over to the Civil Defence to enhance and expand its ability to coordinate and respond to disasters.

92. The United Nations Office for Project Services continued to support the Palestinian Civil Police, the national security forces, the Presidential Guard and other security services through institutional capacity-building initiatives, including training programmes, equipment procurement, the development of information management systems and the provision of physical infrastructure and equipment. It also supported the Ministry of the Interior in the design of a comprehensive institutional capacity-building programme covering the full range of the Ministry's functions.

93. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, building upon their previous collaboration, continued to strengthen the institutional and functional capacity of the Palestinian Shippers' Council. It also provided the Palestinian

private and public sectors with advisory services and technical knowledge in the realm of trade facilitation.

D. Private sector development

94. UNRWA financed 13,811 loans valued at $19.4 million to Palestinian businesses and households in 2014. Women and young people received 30 per cent and 35 per cent of the loans, respectively. The self-sufficiency and sustainability of the programme were affected by the conflict, as evidenced by a net loss of $739,400 in Gaza, whereas in the West Bank the programme earned a net income of $280,821 from its microfinance operations.

E. Coordination of United Nations assistance

95. Under the auspices of the Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process/United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, collaboration and coordination between the numerous donor and United Nations forums were strengthened during the reporting period. The humanitarian country team met regularly to agree on humanitarian advocacy and response measures. With the support of the Coordination Unit within the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations country team continued to coordinate its programming through the development of the United Nations Development Action Framework in alignment with the priorities of the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. Efforts to forge constructive partnerships between the United Nations, the Government and the broader aid community were strengthened. The United Nations continued the preparation of an Ad Hoc Liaison Committee report, strategies and guidance for development and humanitarian work in Gaza, East Jerusalem and Area C and, together with other humanitarian actors, the development of the Gaza Crisis Appeal, the 2015 Strategic Response Plan and the United Nations Support Plan for the Reconstruction of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016.

IV. Donor response to the crisis

Budgetary and fiscal support

96. In 2014, the Government struggled to meet its financial obligations, with expenditure slightly higher than expected and revenue less than projected. It accumulated considerable arrears during the year, particularly to the private sector and the pension system, and had increased its stock of debt to domestic banks to $1.7 billion by January 2015.

Donor coordination

97. The Coordination Unit within the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process has increasingly been called upon to support the United Nations system and prepares substantive contributions for various forums, such as the twice-yearly meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee. The Unit also works to coordinate policy positions and address impediments to the implementation of programmes with key donors and outside actors.

98. The local aid coordination structure continued to serve as a key forum for donors and the State of Palestine. The coordination of humanitarian assistance and advocacy continued to be led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs during the reporting period.

99. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met once during the reporting period, on 22 September 2014 in New York.

V. Unmet needs

100. Of the $5.4 billion pledged in Cairo for the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza, some 23 per cent has been disbursed.

101. Given the continued needs, the 2015 Strategic Response Plan is requesting $705 million. To date, 21 per cent has been raised. Additional support is also urgently needed for the UNRWA core budget, which faces a predicted shortfall of $81.3 million for 2015.

102. United Nations agencies are seeking $1.2 billion to support development programming in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, of which 53 per cent has been funded to date. The UNRWA Emergency Appeal for 2015 is seeking $414.4 million to cover the most pressing humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees. UNRWA estimates that $720 million is needed to allow families to repair their homes and to provide ongoing rental subsidies.

VI. Challenges

103. During the reporting period, the conflict resulted in unprecedented losses and destruction, thereby increasing humanitarian and reconstruction needs. While the temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism is functioning, reconstruction is occurring at a slower pace than needed owing to limited donor funding. The Government must be allowed to assume its full responsibilities in Gaza.

104. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, restrictions on movement and access, demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure and associated displacement of Palestinians have all increased. Furthermore, significant settlement activity is continuing, heightening tensions on the ground. Most importantly, the absence of a credible political horizon continues to negatively affect the operating environment.

VII. Conclusions

105. The operational context for the work of the United Nations during the reporting period was increasingly challenging owing to the conflict and the continued threats to the livelihoods of Palestinians, especially demolitions, while the persistent restrictions continued to pose formidable obstacles to development. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2008) and 1860 (2009), an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with a secure Israel.